TALES

OF

THE PRIORY.

VOL. III.

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TALES

OF

THE PRIORY.

BY

MRS. HOFLAND.

present not my Tales to the reader as if I had chosen the best method of ensuring his approbation, but as using the only means I possessed of engaging his attention.
CRABBE's *Preface*.

IN FOUR VOLUMES.

VOL. III.

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TALES

OF

THE PRIORY.



THE POET'S SON AND THE PAINTER'S DAUGHTER.

CONTINUED.

CHAP. IV.

His frame was languid, and the hectic heat
Flush'd on his pallid face, and countless beat
His languid pulse,————————
———————————— the poet's heart,
Was all unfitted for its earthly part. CRABBE.

THE busy time again succeeded, and Orlando, whose services of course became more important as his knowledge of business increased, was prevented from spending any other time with his friends, than that afforded by a Sunday evening

visit. Mr. Weston's disordered nerves and decreased appetite, again awoke the alarm of his wife, and the extreme solicitude of Mr. Barnard and his family, each of whom felt for him all the interest which near relationship, or long frien. ship could have inspired. His pale looks and shrunken form were, from obvious reasons, more striking to Orlando than any other person ;- and the poor youth, alarmed and afflicted beyond measure, at length prevailed upon his mother to send for that medical assistance, which the father, from motives of economy, had hitherto denied himself.

Mrs. Weston, though not equally alarmed, was the better enabled to comply with her son's request, because his father's poem had already entered a second edition, the money for which had been honourably paid, and had induced the purchaser to offer regular and advantageous employment to Mr. Weston in a *periodical publication. The doctor ac-*

cordingly came, and gave it as his decided opinion, that Mr. Weston must immediately remove to country lodgings, or at least go every night to sleep at some distance from town.

In their circumstances, there could be no doubt but that it was desirable that they should remove immediately, as Mr. Weston's employment could be carried on any where; but the friendship they felt for Mr. Barnard's family, and the many comforts they enjoyed from their kindness, rendered this a step to which they felt almost unequal; and as the Barnards could not persuade them to it, it was at length settled, that a lodging should be taken at Kensington for Mr. Weston only, and it was hoped that the daily walk or ride he would take to town, might be one of the first means of his recovery.

That it would have been so there is no doubt, if the expense to which it subjected him, had not so far preyed on his

spirits, as to counteract in a great measure the good which he received; still his wife and son, in their anxiety for his welfare, urged him to persevere, and he obeyed their wishes, though so much of his time was unavoidably consumed that it became impossible for him to devote that time to his engagement which it required, and which was at length unavoidably withdrawn.

Just before this circumstance took place, Mr. Barnard had received a commission from a nobleman who had known him in early life, to paint him a picture, which he wished to be done at his own seat in Nottinghamshire. So unpleasant to the painter was this part of the requisition that, although this was the first pleasurable recognition he had met with since his return to his own country, he would have declined it but for the persuasions and remonstrances of his wife; who rightly perceived that it was a hinge on which his future fortunes

might turn, and though truly grateful for his avowed preference to his own home, she yet urged his removal to the seat of the nobleman who employed him.

As his stay was likely to continue for some time, the first care of his ever provident and active wife, was to lessen their expenses by providing her foot-boy with a better place; her next was to offer her own bed to her friend, and intreat her to discharge her lodgings; and, in order to save her any pain from the sense of accepting too much, she offered to board Mrs. Weston constantly, and her husband occasionally, for a very moderate stipend.

This truly kind offer was thankfully accepted, and all arrears due to the house were immediately discharged, because Mrs. Barnard saw that the people who had let them the rooms were angry at the new plan which was entered into, and would not fail to be impertinent if any

opening were left, and she could not bear that a person, whose very being hung on so slender a thread as Mr. Weston's, or so meek and unoffending a creature as his wife should be subject to looks of mistrust or insolence from those under the same roof; and with all her suggestions they prudently complied.

But alas! at this time they were a little indebted to their butcher, and a little more to their grocer; who, finding that they had ceased to be customers, began to be very importunate. Fearful therefore of involving himself beyond all bounds, Mr. Weston gave up his lodgings at Kensington, just when they had really become serviceable to him, and applied himself to seek that employment which, as yet, he was little able to undertake.

At the time when Mrs. Barnard paid her quarter's rent, the mistress of the house reproached her with having inveigled her lodgers away, and so provoked her that she actually gave her

notice to quit; a notice which was, when the affair was represented to Mr. Barnard, fully confirmed by him; for the slightest offence to his wife was one, (perhaps the only one he never could forgive,) and from this moment peculiar malice was exerted against the Westons, as the unconscious movers of all.

One morning, when Mrs. Barnard was set out to pick up a bit of some thing nice and cheap, to tempt poor Weston with, she was overtaken by Seraphina, who, flying after her without her hat, her pale expressive countenance informed her in a moment that something terrible had happened. Losing not a moment she returned, and found Mr. Weston agitated, pale, and trembling, on the top of the stairs, between two men, and his wife fainting, but unaided, leaning against the wall.

"What's all this about?" said Mrs. Barnard, assuming a look of courage which she was far from feeling.

" I am arrested by Davidson, the grocer," said Mr. Weston; "and my poor wife! oh! my dear friend, for heaven's sake comfort her."

" Comfort! nonsense; there's nothing to hurt her: what's the money you want?"

" Between sixteen and seventeen pounds."

" Here's a pretty piece of work truly, for such a paltry sum," said she, brushing past the men, and seizing Mrs. Weston by the arm, of whom, when she had shut her up in the painting room, she enquired, "if they had any money at all?"

" Only between three and four pounds," replied she, astonished at the manners of her friend.

" Well, that will do; don't cry, your tears kill your husband by inches: let me see; oh! this will do! here take my silk handkerchief, my dear Ma'am, and wipe me this picture perfectly clean."

Mrs. Weston, though shaking in every limb, obeyed; and the anxious, hurried friend, collecting her wits as well as she could, returned to Weston, and after telling the man who had made him his prisoner, that all should be settled in ten minutes, begged him to walk into the parlour. This was not the bailiff's intention; he said, "he must have immediate bail, or the gentleman might go to his house, where he should have every accommodation."

Mrs. Barnard looked in his face, remembered his prisoner's weakness, and said, "Well, only stop and eat a few oysters with your prisoner, and don't go without seeing me: I shall be back in ten minutes."

A coach had been called for poor Weston, and in a moment Mrs. Barnard and her picture were in it, but not till she had whispered her terrified daughter, "exert yourself, my love, and feed that man with the best in the house."

The servant willingly assisted Seraphina; and whilst the bailiff and his follower, at due distance, were regaled, Weston threw himself on the sofa, and his agonized wife walked with perturbed step up and down the drawing room, not daring to behold him again. Her long-drawn sighs were eagerly listened to by the mistress of the house, whom Seraphina saw standing on the stairs, as she came out of the sitting room.

"It is sad work this, Miss."

"It is, indeed: I did not think there were such things till now; I mean people so very —"

Seraphina stopped, but her eyes finished the sentence; and the woman departed without enjoying the sight she came for, of seeing Weston dragged to prison.

In a very short time, the bailiff's follower stepped down to see for another coach, but Seraphina understanding her mother's look, put half-a-crown into his hand, and begged him not to be in a

hurry; she had, however, scarcely done so, and returned to Mrs. Weston, when her mother drove to the door, accompanied by the creditor, Davidson.

When they entered the room, poor Weston raised himself, and said he was ready to go.

"This gentleman must not have your company at present," said Mrs. Barnard, "for here is Mr. Davidson's money; and now, Sir, what is your demand?"

The bailiff was put in good humour by good cheer, he therefore, simply required his fees; and the grocer, with an assurance "that he had no idea the gemman was so bad," followed him out.

Even poor Mrs. Weston, "albeit unused to the flying mood," might, in another moment, be said to fly to the arms of her husband, while her late active friend, overcome by her hurry, her fear of having done wrong, and her joy at having relieved them, burst into a fit of hysteric weeping.

By the cares of her daughter, she was soon restored; and she then enquired of Mr. Weston, "if he had any other creditor, for she saw clearly that this affair had given him a great shock, though his present relief made him less sensible of it, and she dreaded the repetition of such a scene."

"I only owe the butcher twelve pounds, and the tailor for Orlando's new suit."

"And your rents will come in next month; then you shall give him a bill, I mean the butcher, (send for him Sara,) and then, as you are living at no expense now, you will not only pay that with ease, but have something pretty to go on with."

"Living at *no* expense, my dear friend! to be sure it is very little, but yet *your* claims will swallow up that money."

Oh! Sara and me have settled all that long ago, so never mention it again; the

fact is, that since her father's absence, she has undertaken to do a disagreeable piece of work, but one that has answered very well; it has made matters even in our housekeeping; so my dear Barnard, who has the soul of a prince, will have had the satisfaction of serving his friend, and be never the worse for it; and my dear girl there (bless her!) has a little present for both you and your son into the bargain."

In a moment, Seraphina had brought down her work box, and drawn thence eight new shirts, tied in two parcels, which she laid silently before Mrs. Weston, who could not speak, but whose husband was about to do so, when the butcher entered the room.

When the business was explained, the good-natured tradesman readily agreed to take a bill at two months; and observing with what difficulty Mr. Weston wrote the bill, he said, "I'm afraid, Sir,

you didn't get much good from going into the country lodgings?"

"Yes, I did, I got better fast, but I couldn't afford to keep them any longer; but for them you would have been paid sooner, I assure you."

"I don't complain, Sir, you be more regular than many as I deal with, and always was; and I am sure, Sir, if country air be what you wants, I've a little spot out on the Hampstead road where I've a bit of a paddock for convenience, with a little cottage in it, that's quite at your service; 'tis a poor place, but it's clean and neat, and the sitting room's pretty enough; there's a sofa bed in it, and if you have got bedding, why all I can say is, you're welcome to it."

Mrs. Barnard earnestly assured them, "she had bedding and every thing;" Seraphina, "knew the place, it was a little paradise;" and the offer was joyfully accepted.

All the time the butcher talked, not

liking to look such a pale man in the face as Mr. Weston, he had kept his eyes fixed on Seraphina's work box, which he also handled and did not relinquish till the last moment, observing as he left the room, "that he begged pardon for touching it, but it was the prettiest thing he had ever seen; he supposed it came from abroad?"

"I am so glad you like it," said the happy girl; "but you would not like to carry it, or I would say, pray, take it to your wife as a present from me."

The butcher looked in Mrs. Barnard's face.

"Oh! take it, take it; my daughter means what she says, I am sure it is given with a good heart, and taken by a good one too: here tie this handkerchief over it; and good morning."

His heart relieved of a load of care, Mr. Weston now went to his new lodging accompanied by his wife and the necessaries they needed, in a coach; while

Seraphina, with various little packages, followed them: every day they were visited either by mother or daughter, until Mr. Weston was so far better, as to be able to come and eat his dinner in London; and Mrs. Barnard became convinced, that he had no actual complaint, which care, good nursing, and good air, would not cure, if his mind could be kept easy, but on that subject there was much doubt.

Anxious to return to his family, Mr. Barnard executed the commission of his noble employer some weeks earlier than he had calculated upon, and broke in unexpectedly on his wife and daughter, one evening just after their return from visiting the invalid; and when Orlando had snatched an hour to run over to see them.

In consequence of his presence, Mrs. Barnard forbore to tell the history of his father's arrest, to which he was happily a stranger, but the following morning,

not without some secret misgivings, she began to relate the whole affair, saying repeatedly, "she had not *sold* the picture, only got twenty pounds upon it, till his return, but it was certain, that the man would never let her see it from that day to this."

"I am glad," said Mr. Barnard, "that you released Weston, indeed I would have stripped the walls to have done it, but you shouldn't have meddled with any *old* pictures, and you say this was very dusty, surely it was not my Tintoretto?"

"That's the very name Seraphina said it was, and for that matter I had a kind of suspicion."

"Good God! you have ruined me! thrown away my Tintoret! my St. Catherine! sold it for twenty guineas, though you saw me yourself pay above —"

"I did not *sell* it, though the broker now wants to persuade me so, and I grant I hardly knew what I did."

"Oh! 'tis gone, lost, my great study for colour, the very picture too that Lord ——— wants to complete his collection, and which I promised to sell him for three hundred pounds."

Mrs. Barnard looked ready to faint, while her husband, though struggling with his vexation, walked about in such a fume, as to prove to her the importance of the loss.

• "Dear mother," said Seraphina, "did you not take Mr. Davidson, the grocer, with you?"

"Yes, child, I did, but he stood at the door while I spoke."

Seraphina put on her bonnet, stepped to Mr. Davidson's, and asked him, "if he remembered any thing about it," to which he readily replied, "Yes, he remembered every word that passed, for that struck by the appearance of a pretty clock, he followed Mrs. Barnard, though unnoticed, into the parlour, and heard her repeatedly say, that she did *not sell*

the picture, only it might remain there, till her husband came home, and he would pay handsome for the accommodation. I remember those words particularly, because, I thought I might as well have got a trifle myself the same way; then again, I thought it wasn't *law* if so."

"But will you say all this to the broker, Sir?"

"That I will, Miss," said he, putting on his hat, "I owe your Mamma a good turn, and shall be glad to do any thing to serve her."

Seraphina and the grocer soon reached the house, it was yet very early, the picture-dealer's wife was making her husband's breakfast, on hearing their business, she stepped to the stair-foot, and called out, "here be a young lady come to speak to you about a picture."

"What picture?" said the husband.

"Vy, that there picture you sent on

liking to my Lord Delwar's last Monday, that St. Catherine, you know."

A volley of oaths to his wife, cursing her for a fool, so terrified Seraphina, that she ran out of the house, and the grocer having in vain endeavoured to be heard, at length followed, anxiously assuring her, that he would at any time come forward to aid her father to recover his own; but Seraphina knew her father too well, to believe that he would take the necessary steps; she had seen him too frequently submit to imposition, and fly from vulgar contest, merely because it offended his too fastidious feelings, to believe that he would do more on this occasion, than he had done on many others. After looking in the grocer's directory, to see where Lord Delwar lived, she returned slowly home.

She found her mother alone, and weeping,

"Is my father gone out in anger?" said Seraphina.

"Oh no! if he were not the best, kindest, noblest creature that ever lived, I should not mind so much; he has done his best to conquer his vexation, kissed me with the greatest tenderness, and has set off to visit poor Weston, but no power on earth will induce him to go to the picture-dealer, because he says, he is a low fellow, and a rascal who took advantage of my distress, and he cannot speak to such a creature. My dear child, never allow your mind to be embarrassed as mine was, all this arises from my not having my wits about me, and allowing myself to feel enraged with the woman below."

"Dear mother, you had more self-command than you can recollect," said Seraphina, relating all Mr. Davidson had said, and going forward with her story, till she got to the words Lord Delwar; when Mrs. Barnard jumping up, cast off her sorrow, declared she would dress herself as nice as a new scraped carrot,

and desired Seraphina to write her name most beautifully on a card, with just a request to speak to his lordship, and that would do for her.

In a short time, Mrs. Barnard had sent in her card, his lordship was not down stairs, but two young gentlemen were in the breakfast-room, and having asked what the woman was like, and being answered, " that she was well dressed, not a bit like a petitioner, and looked very pretty considering she was not young," they determined on sending for her in, to quiz her.

" If you do," said a boy about seven years old, who was playing in the room, my lord will be very angry, and I will be sure to tell him what you say, and you know when you quizzed me about my accidence, he said, " people should never jest with children, nor servants, and that quizzing."

" Who talks of quizzing?" said Lord Delwar as he entered.

"Only George, Sir," said a young officer presenting the card, and in a tone which the little boy already understood, "the lady is handsome, not young, but perfectly *comme il faut.*"

"Desire the lady to walk in," said Lord Delwar.

The moment Mrs. Barnard entered the room, the little boy sidled up to her as if to protect her from danger, and Lord Delwar stood, as if ready to attend to her business with courtesy, but poor Mrs. Barnard's eye had caught two objects, which for a moment diverted her from his lordship, one was her own picture standing upon two chairs, the other the mild black eyes of her little friend, which "came over her like the memory of the years that are past."

"I beg your pardon, Sir, I hope my lord you'll forgive me, but—but pray, my lord, is that your picture?"

Lord Delwar immediately conceived, that Mrs. Barnard was the sister, or

friend of the picture-dealer, and that her question was intended to entrap him as a purchaser, he therefore answered sternly, " it is *not* my picture."

Mrs. Barnard uttered an inward ejaculation of thanksgiving.

" The picture has great merit in its colouring," continued his lordship, but it does not satisfy me in its expression, besides, I find Mr. Sinister offered it a month ago to Sir John Littleton, for four hundred pounds, and he will not take less than five he says, from me, so you may remove it as soon as you please."

" Oh! thank you my lord a thousand times, I have a coach at the door. I am so much obliged to you, my lord."

" Have you disposed of it to some one else?" said Lord Delwar, looking as if he now felt reluctant to part with it.

" No, my lord, we do not want to sell it; it is valuable to my husband as a study; but I ought to explain; this

picture, my Lord, is the property of Mr. Barnard, an artist, and I may say a gentleman; for I am sure he could not do a wrong thing, or an unhandsome thing by any human being."

"(Um —, a good definition!) But how came this picture in Sinister's possession? I cannot deliver it to you without explanation?"

"Why, my Lord, Mr. Barnard was gone into the country to paint a picture for the Duke of ———, and I happened to be in want of twenty pounds, so I took this picture, having a respectable person with me, and borrowed it of Sinister, leaving this as his security; and as we had put a good deal of money in his pocket, I thought it no great favour. I was in a great flutter, and ran away almost without thanking him; so a day or two after I called, just to beg him to be careful of the picture, for my daughter had told me it was very valuable, and

a great favourite with her father, and to my surprize it was not in the house, and he had the assurance to say I had *sold* it to him, believing that as my husband is a genius he would be easily cheated of course, and that I being a woman, —"

"So then, on the strength of these presumptions, he has offered me the picture for the moderate profit of five hundred and five pounds!"

Lord Delmar laid his hand on the bell-rope, but at the same moment his servant informed him, "that Mr. Sinister begged to know if his Lordship had made up his mind about the picture?"

"I *have*: remove it into the hall, and send Sinister to me."

When the picture-dealer entered, he perceived the picture was removing, on which he looked very blank, but on seeing Mrs. Barnard, his face was more ruefully elongated.

"So it appears this picture, which

you thought you had bought for twenty guineas, and sold for five hundred, is not yours to sell, Mr. Sinister?"

"Why, my Lord, I'll tell you, my Lord; Mrs. Barnard there, comes to me in great distress, my Lord; — yes! crying, my Lord; she may deny it if she can, my Lord."

"I don't deny it, I'm sure," said Mrs. Barnard, "for I never was in such a quandary before; very likely I did cry."

Her coolness completely disconcerted Sinister, who looked in Lord Delmar's face as if to gather materials for proceeding.

"So, she being in distress, and, as you say, *crying*, you kindly advanced her twenty pounds, having previously made many twenties by her husband. You then offered the picture at a *moderate* price to Sir John Littleton; and, but — go away, I beg, — only let me hear you acknowledge you have done with the picture."

"But he has not, my Lord, till I've paid him, and here, here, it is: two ten pounds, please to witness gentlemen, and here is a two pound note for your civility; for I don't deny it was a civility at the time; for we are not in Rome: we have no friends to ask a little favour of here."

Mr. Sinister saw Lord Delmar's eye was on him: he took the two ten pounds and returned the other, saying, "However things might appear, he would do twice as much for her husband any time," and left the room. Mrs. Barnard was following, when the little boy, looking her earnestly in the face, said,

"Did you live in Rome yourself?"

"Oh yes, Sir! for many years."

"So did my mamma live there, and she never talks about Rome but she cries. I wonder whether you knew my mamma's Crosland, that she left at Rome, who was married to an artist?"

"*Your* mamma, *yours*, my love! O yes! those eyes are Lady Emily's own; I felt somehow — yes, I really felt —"

Mrs. Barnard could not say how she felt, but her auditors could; and Lord Delmar, who was nearly related to Sir Strahan Churchill, the present husband of Lady Emily, had heard that lady mention her favourite maid too often not to comprehend her feelings. He desired her to sit down and compose herself, and told her that Lady Emily was coming to town with her family, which consisted of two daughters, and the son she saw, who was the hopes of the family.

"And now," said his Lordship kindly, "that I am better acquainted, may I ask, how you happened to get into such a dilemma with the man who has left us?"

"Why, my Lord, I had been to market, and when I came in, what should I see, but poor Mr. Weston, a fellow-

lodger of ours, 'a gentleman and a scholar,' as my husband says, and what's more, a dying man, standing between two bailiffs, and his wife as white as a sheet, fainting by his side: well! it put me quite into a flutter, and I looked round how I could help them just at the moment, and seeing this picture of a pretty young woman with a wheel behind her, it never entered my head she was my husband's St. Catherine that I'd heard him talk so much of, and saw him pay a round sum of money for; not but all the saints might have gone for me just then, I do confess, so you see, my Lord, I took it."

"I am heartily glad that you sent the one in question on an errand of mercy, rather than one of necessity," said Lord Delmar, "and I shall soon pay my respects to her again in Mr. Barnard's painting room, although your critique upon her will prevent my taking her from thence."

"My critique, my Lord!"

"Yes, yours! which is not the less valuable because it is unintentionally given, and naturally made; you saw beauty in this head, but it was the beauty of a peasant, not the elevation of a martyr; you felt justly, I am convinced."

Mrs. Barnard now made her final curtesy, after being repeatedly assured, that the moment Lady Emily arrived, she should be informed, and that in the mean time Master George should visit her."

"Well, gentlemen," said Lord Delmar, "my appetite for breakfast is not a little quickened by this prelude, which has certainly combined a good deal of dramatic interest: whether it has satiated, or only sharpened yours, for the charitable amusement of quizzing, I do not know; but your laughter need not hurt a woman who has rescued a man of merit

in distress, baffled a villain, found a long-lost mistress, saved the property of a beloved husband, and secured a *friend*."

CHAP. II.

Who has not felt exulting rapture's glow
For England's triumph o'er her haughty foe?
Who has not wept for England's gallant train,
That fought and died for Liberty and Spain?
MISS MITFORD.

THE circumstances I am now speaking of took place in the spring of 1814, when the heart of every Briton was called upon, from day to day, to rejoice in a succession of victories unparalleled in the annals of his country, and which were not less dear to the lover of glory, than the breast of humanity; since they promised a lasting peace to a long-suffering world.

It will be naturally supposed, that these circumstances were felt by the poet and

the painter, with that lofty enjoyment, and peculiar gust, which such tidings were likely to create in minds of acute sensibility and expansive powers: their sympathies, and similarity of opinions and feelings, naturally rendered each more dear to the other, and their friendship resembled that which is found in early life, when the heart is unchilled by experience, and unfettered by worldly cares and considerations. Beneath this genial influence, the languid frame and sinking spirits of poor Weston, seemed to renovate; and the visits of his friend with the news of the day, fell like dew upon the withered herbage, and half restored him to the world, in which he again seemed to feel an interest. But it was still evident, that he was a very weak man; and although his complaint had no specific form as yet, Mrs. Barnard feared that another winter might prove fatal to him, unless some means of assisting his circumstances could be found

which would prevent anxiety on that account; and her benevolent mind was perpetually bent on the possibility of attaining it.

Peace was now proclaimed: the warriors of our own, and the sovereigns of other countries, poured into London, with strangers from all parts of the British dominions; and Lady Emily Churchill, with her family, came some time before they intended. Neither the gaiety nor the multiplicity of her engagements prevented her from sending for Mrs. Barnard as soon as she arrived; and, as she contrived to meet her without witnesses, their interview was affecting and confidential. Lady Emily had many sorrowful recollections, and hair-breadth escapes to relate in the first part of her history; and when it set her down in England, the difficulties of narrow circumstances followed; which were, however, relieved in the third year of her widowhood, by a fortune left her by an

half-brother, from whom she had no reason to expect it. Her re-appearance in the world, still a fine woman under thirty, rendered it by no means surprising that she had married, in the general acceptation of the word, *exceedingly well.*

"And you, my good Crossland, though you must have had many trials from public circumstances, have, I trust, been comfortable: — indeed, it does me good to look at you: it makes me feel younger: you are so little altered, that I conclude myself the same."

Mrs. Barnard never told stories, therefore she did not attend to the half-questioning tone of Lady Emily, but answered to that which concerned herself.

"To be sure, my Lady, I was married in a very strange hurrying kind of a way, but I never repented one moment, because I was always very proud of my husband, who was the most *honourable* of men! and though it may not become me to say it, there cannot be a kinder,

or better; and as to cleverness and genius, and all that—"

"That he is a man of extraordinary powers, I cannot have any doubt; and that his disposition was excellent, I fully proved from his sympathy towards me, and the many services which I owe him: but men of genius are seldom prudent, and in the gay circle in which he moved there were many temptations. I have, on this account, often felt great fears for you: I shall be happy to learn they were needless."

"Why, my Lady, every man has his weak place, that's certain; Mr. Barnard's is this, he can't resist a handsome face, see it where he will: in a palace, or a garret, if it was to be had, he would have it; and to be sure, the money that went that way cost me many a sigh at first when we married, but when I knew better, then I got over it."

"At *first*, when you married, how

shocking! I can't imagine how you could get over it."

"Why, my Lady, I found it was all in the way of business, so I put up with it, as I did with having a heap of dead men's heads, and dusty goddesses stuck all over the house; but I will never grumble again, for it was owing to his fancy for these things that ever I went after one of them to Lord Delmar's, and saw your sweet little son, my Lady, and so found you out."

"Then it is upon *pictures*, that he spends his money."

"Yes, my Lady, which is of course very foolish in *him*, because he can paint them for himself, you know."

Lady Emily shook her head: "there are many greater trials in life, Barnard, than this."

"There may, to be sure, Madam; but yet, to come to a strange place, where money does every thing, and to see one's husband, who used to be some-

body, go down, down, as it were to being nobody; and to think that the cash such things cost, would have put him into his own place as it were, would make any woman's heart ache who loved her husband, and had been used to see him in the best of company."

Lady Emily assented to this remark. On calling upon Mr. Barnard, she was delighted with Seraphina's appearance; and finding her talents for drawing and music had been highly cultivated by her father, she became anxious to engage her as a governess to her daughters. Lady Emily had ever been a favourite with Mr. Barnard, and his wife well knew that if any person on earth could draw this jewel from his bosom, it would be her, but she did not think it would be possible; otherwise, she gave her own consent; believing that it would increase the utility and happiness of a daughter, of whom she was justly proud.

Several circumstances, however, con-

curred to render such a home most desirable; an intercourse with Rome was again opened, and Mr. Barnard had not only many former patrons there, who would receive him with pleasure, but some who were considerably indebted to him; and through the kind exertions of Lord Delmar he had gained various commissions for pictures to be painted in Rome, if he returned there, to which he had no possible objection, but that of his daughter's health, for though fully re-established, he felt upon that subject with the fears a parent only knows.

Having at length decided that he would winter in Italy, Mr. Barnard agreed that his daughter should immediately remove to Sir Strahan Churchill's, as he wished to ascertain that her situation there should be in every respect perfectly consonant to his wishes, before he left the country; for with him the welfare and happiness of his child was paramount to every other consideration.

He also made one decisive agreement with Lady Emily; which was, that if she found herself tempted (as numbers now were) to take a trip to France, his daughter should be left at her country-seat, and on no account visit a country, which he considered as no better than "a den of thieves, a nest of ruffians, whose atrocities he had witnessed too often either to forgive or endure."

The actual removal of Seraphina, and the projected one of her parents, was much the greatest affliction poor Orlando had ever known; and he now conceived, that the shackles which bound him to his monotonous duties were doubly galling; and when the first Sunday evening he visited Mrs. Barnard at the accustomed hour, and found his father had departed, in consequence of indisposition, and that there was no Seraphina to soothe his fears respecting him, his heart sunk; gloomy forebodings took possession of him; and the consolations of Mrs. Bar-

nard fell upon his ear unheeded. Orlando had twice looked at his watch, and observed, that it was time for him to set off, and as often had Mrs. Barnard assured him it was not his time yet, when the thundering knock of a footman announced the only visitor they could expect at such an hour, Seraphina being set down by Lady Emily, as she was on her way to the Sunday concerts of a lady of high rank.

Seraphina was elegantly though not splendidly dressed, and Orlando thought he had never seen her look so well, yet he felt dissatisfied with her for doing so; and when she proceeded to inform her delighted father, with what kindness Lady Emily treated her;—that she had been one night to the Opera; another to the Concert at Hanover Square; that she had sung in a private party, and been highly approved, and was preparing for a much larger, which Lady Emily was about to give; the heart of Orlando ap-

peared to fall by degrees, into the very climax of misery; every circumstance which opened the gaieties of life on his young friend, seemed to shut out its commonest comforts to him.

Many times Orlando rose, ready to fly, but as often he sat down again, unable to tear himself away, until Mrs. Barnard was compelled to urge his departure. Sleep, for the first time, forsook his eyes, and a sense of ill-humour combined with that of grief, to wound his heart, and exhaust his spirits.

Yet, surely, it was not envy of Seraphina's happiness. Had he not wished a thousand times that he could raise her to the highest pinnacle of greatness? When had he indulged a dream of wealth or pleasure, in days to come, in which she had not, as his friend, his more than sister, been the principal personage in their united family circle?—Nor could he say, in conscience, that Seraphina was changed, even when she described those

scenes which most captivated her fancy: her eyes were cast towards him with an expression of tender concern; nor had she spoken of herself till her most particular enquiries had been made as to the health of his father. — No! Seraphina was not altered, but poor Orlando was in love, and was jealous.

For a single hour, every Sunday evening, Orlando saw Seraphina as he returned from visiting his father; and every time he had done so, he determined it should be the last time. But the remembrance that whether he would or not, the *last* must very soon come, induced him *just* to indulge himself *once* again. In August, Sir Strahan's family would leave town, and in September, Mr. and Mrs. Barnard set out for Italy.

Although the painter was now rich in commissions, yet he was by no means so in cash; his painting room, like that of many other artists in this eventful year, had been crowded by amateurs, and ad-

mirers, whose money was consumed in purposes connected with the joyful festivities of the times, and thus the summer had passed away "unprofitably gay;" and Mrs. Barnard, on whom such cares always devolved eventually, found that it would require all her management to gain sufficient money for paying the rent, ensuring the means of travelling, and the ensuing expenses of the winter; as there was but too great a probability that the impoverished state of their Italian friends might retard the payment of their debts for a considerable time after their arrival.

In this accumulation of her resources, she thought there could be no harm in applying to her tenant of the Greenhow farm; enquiring, "If he were so situated as to advance any part of his rent beforehand, for which she was willing to make him an adequate recompence." She was answered immediately by his nephew, saying, "That although it would be at-

tended with some difficulty, she might depend on receiving the whole of the ensuing year's demand, or more, if possible, at the time she had fixed upon for departure."

Mrs. Barnard received this letter at the hour when her husband was gone up to visit his friend Weston, and bring him and his lady down to dinner; for, as the latter could not walk so far, Mr. Barnard never asked her, but when he was able to bring her himself in his "own hackney coach." The smiles of Mrs. Barnard's welcome, at this time, called forth no answering smiles from her guests; for the days were now numbered when they must bid adieu to those friendly greetings, which had so long afforded them the only solace of existence, save what they derived from each other.

After listening to Mr. Weston's "tale of symptoms," which, although by no means more lamentable than usual, were uttered in a much more languid tone,

Mrs. Barnard said, "Well, never mind; I'll cure you of all, with your good lady's permission, and, although my prescription may be bitter to the palate, 'twill be sweet to the heart of such a wife as her."

"What can you mean, my friend? what can I do for him?"

"Every thing: you can permit him to go with *us*; if he winters in Italy, it will give him a new lease of life. You know that when you first parted with him to country lodgings, you felt it a trial, but you soon got over it, and — "

"I know what you would say," replied Mrs. Weston, "and I know, too, what you think and have a right to think of such a poor creature as I am; but though very weak, I am not selfish, and if my dear Weston could go, I should be most happy; yes, very happy to spare him."

A deluge of tears followed this profession of happiness, whilst her husband en-

treated her not to agitate herself, as the thing was impossible.

"It would make *me* most happy," said Mr. Barnard; "and —" a fear of wounding where he most wished to heal, even a dread that his wife's benevolent wishes might be improperly expressed, silenced him suddenly; on which Mrs. Barnard, who had arranged her plan, immediately added,

"My husband is so afraid of *speaking*, but the thing is this: he wishes to engage you to write a history, or description, or something of that sort, for which he will paint views: that's the matter, only I can't explain things handsomely."

Mr. Weston's countenance brightened into happiness; and he seized the hand of his friend, as he said, "to seal the bargain." Most cordially was it given, though the painter's head was at the moment averted; for his glistening eyes were employed in thanking his wife for having relieved his heart of the two-fold load

which had long pressed upon it, as to the desire of benefiting his friend, and the difficulty of the task, both in point of delicacy and expense.

Orlando was as much rejoiced at this arrangement, as he could be with any thing in the present gloomy state of his affairs, and united with his father in earnestly pressing his mother to go and board in the country when the travellers should have departed; but this she positively refused, saying, "that as she had only *him* left, it was surely right that she should live near him; and that on the contrary, she would have lodgings in the city;" and, as she really exerted herself to the utmost, in parting with his father, this plan was agreed to, and she removed thither accordingly. As Mr. Weston wanted many necessaries previous to setting out, (although Mrs. Barnard took upon herself all expenses from that time forward; "knowing," as she internally observed, "that geniuses were quite *above*

managing money,") he procured it from the farmer who rented Weston Green; and having also received the money in advance, for a projected edition of his successful poem, he was enabled to make a handsome present to the butcher; and to leave his wife in possession, as she declared, of more than she wanted.

At length, therefore, they set out for Falmouth, from whence they took shipping for Leghorn, a plan which not only was desirable for Mr. Weston's health, to whom a long voyage was recommended, but because it accorded with the wishes of Mr. Barnard, who, so far from flying, as artists in general very wisely did, to view the riches of the Louvre, and inhale the spirit of art from that unrivalled store-house, was desirous of avoiding a place which reminded him of all which his foster country had lost; justly observing, "that what was desirable to other Englishmen in his profession, could by no means apply to one,

whose best days had been blest with the advantages they sought."

When they were really gone, poor Mrs. Weston, like a bow which had been bent too far, relapsed into all the timidity and helplessness which belonged to her character, and which had never been counteracted with good effect by any person about her but Mrs. Barnard; who, notwithstanding the dissimilarity of their characters, really loved her so well, that she was continually endeavouring to draw out all that was most estimable in her, and render the excellent dispositions she possessed effective in their operation, on her own happiness and that of the husband whom (like herself with Mr. Barnard) she loved so fondly. Without any motive for exertion, and with a constant excuse, and indeed cause for low spirits, in the absence and ill health of her husband, Mrs. Weston became now dependant on Orlando for all the happiness she enjoyed, and her perpetual

demands upon his attention, harassed the young man and offended his master, without affording the least possible relief to herself, as the desire for his company was an appetite which, the more it was indulged, the more insatiate it became. Soon after Christmas, Orlando's heart was gladdened by the sight of a note from Seraphina to his mother, announcing her arrival in London, and her intention of seeing her the very first opportunity, at the same time lamenting that the situation of Mrs. Weston was at such a distance from the residence of Sir Strahan Churchill, as to deprive her in a great measure of the power of visiting her, which she had counted upon as her highest gratification during the absence of her parents.

"I wish, mother," said Orlando, "you would leave these lodgings; it would be no object to me to go a mile farther to see you, and it is a wretched dismal place for Seraphina to come to."

"But I cannot, my dear, for my money

is very nearly gone, and I shall have no more till Gibson sends some from Weston on Lady-day, and then you know it will not be much. I was so anxious that your father should have every thing comfortable, that I sent a few things after him to Falmouth that I knew he wished for; and somehow I thought next to nothing would keep me, but I find a little goes every day;—in London things are so dear."

Orlando was much concerned to hear this, for he really wanted many things which his affectionate consideration withheld him from speaking of, and which his mother had not the faculty of discovering, as Mrs. Barnard did, who had now for nearly four years, been the medium of all those humble comforts to be found in well-mended stockings, shirts, cravats, new-bound hats, and renewed buttons. He could not look now to Seraphina's assistance, nor did he wish to woo her pity as he was wont; but he was cer-

tainly most desirous to appear smart in her eyes, and it was impossible for him to call upon her in her magnificent habitation, in his present habiliments.

But Orlando was not humbled at this time by Seraphina's appearance, for when he first saw her she was sitting with his mother in a gown which he was partial to, and all that appearance in which true kindness, devoid of all pretension, seeks to have itself recognised in the heart. She had received a letter, and was the bearer of one from the travellers, and their accounts were of the most agreeable kind, so that the evening passed delightfully; and with Seraphina on his arm, Orlando did not think the road from the city to Manchester-square at all too long; but the house, the lighted hall, the stylish servants, the moment they flashed upon his eye, subdued the spirits in which he had indulged, and he could not forbear wishing that Seraphina had never become the inhabitant of so grand a place.

"But I am only one of the dependants," said Seraphina.

"Nobody can remember that, who sees you, Seraphina; I am sure you have the presence of a princess."

Seraphina was beginning to answer when the door opened, and a tall handsome man in regimentals stepped out; he spoke to Seraphina, and measured her conductor with an eye which was rather curious than friendly. The servant held the door open, it was too late for Orlando to stop, and he had it scarcely in his power to whisper, "who is that?"

"Captain Churchill, Sir Strahan's brother."

The door was closed, and with it the late exultation of poor Orlando's heart; but how increased were the throbbings of that heart, when he immediately perceived the Captain turn back to the house, and as he passed him again measuring him with that haughty stare, which the insolence of prosperity deems the due of

all who, from the humble path of life, dare to cross the steps, or intercept the views, of their more elevated fellow mortals.

But the spirit of Orlando was not to be cowed by a look, and the eye of insult, met that of cool defiance, in so determinate a gaze, that the Captain passed, and Orlando walked forward, more erect than he had ever done in his life; but long before he reached home, he felt only that he was miserable; — that he had lost an opportunity of explaining his feelings to Seraphina, and should probably never enjoy such another; whilst she, surrounded by gaiety and splendor, admired and flattered, and probably feeling only for him that sisterly regard which was all he had hitherto sought to inspire; might, unblamed, listen to sentiments of a softer nature, from one who had every advantage of person and situation.

A few nights after this, Orlando was sent to the west end of the town on business, and, although at a great distance

from the square where Seraphina lived, he could not forbear just to look at the place; the rooms were lighted up as if company were expected, and, after standing for a few minutes, he perceived Seraphina enter, and going up to a harp, place herself before it; in a few moments Captain Churchill entered also, and appeared to assist her in regulating the strings, and his manner was evidently that of one assiduous to please; in Seraphina he could discern no peculiarity, and even her figure was soon taken from him by the drawing of a curtain; he returned in a state of anxiety still more terrible than the past.

In a few days he was presented by his mother with every thing he appeared to want, a suit of clothes, a new hat, &c. she seemed delighted with his surprise; and told him that he must not suppose she had distressed herself, for she had contrived a plan which would set every thing to rights. "I will go," said she, "and

spend two or three months, with old uncle Weston; you know, Orlando, I have never personally offended him."

It will be naturally supposed, that Orlando thus equipped did not omit to call on Seraphina the first opportunity; she met him in the room appropriated to the use of herself and pupils, both of whom were with her. She received him with evident pleasure, which was not decreased when she mentioned, as by accident, that Captain Churchill had that morning set out for France, whither it was not unlikely that Sir Strahan and Lady Emily would follow him; "in which case," she added, "as that journey is interdicted to me, I believe myself and my charge will be sent down immediately to the 'Oaks,' in Rutlandshire, from whence we so lately came."

In the course of this conversation, although it was necessarily under restraint, Seraphina so earnestly intreated Orlando to promote his mother's plan

for visiting old Mr. Weston, that he was induced to think the idea of her going thither had originated with her; nor could be without a suspicion, that she had assisted her with the means of removal. It was pleasant to him to think that Seraphina was interested in his future welfare, as he hoped she also conceived that no assistance his uncle could render him in future life would be valuable to him, unless shared by her; and he felt certainly gratified with the idea that she was returning into the country, where *he* might hope to be remembered by her, and with this cherished consolation in his mind he bade her farewell.

Seraphina had just passed her eighteenth year, and was certainly much handsomer now than when Orlando first knew her, being then a tall, unformed girl, much more matured in mind than person. She inherited a good figure from her mother, which education had rendered more graceful than that of her parent,

but she had not her fair complexion; for that of Seraphina was inclined to the brunette; her face was certainly a good deal like her father's; but it was still more like the faces which adorned his painting room, and had so often excited uneasy attention from his wife. Her eyes were dark and brilliant, yet their expression was mild and thoughtful, they were the eyes of the dove; her nose was nearly that of the Grecian statue; her mouth entirely Roman; the upper lip short and full, succeeded by a dimpled chin, most exquisitely formed; the fine proportion of her head, neck, and shoulders, left nothing for the sculptor to desire; and her whole appearance had an air of unassuming goodness, quiet dignity, and innate purity, which asked only for time, to render it the perfect representative of a Roman matron, or a Christian saint, in the first ages of the church.

The highest accomplishment Seraphina possessed, was, her knowledge of her

father's art; but she was also a scientific singer, and her greatest charm, undoubtedly consisted in the sweetness and compass of her voice, which

——— could untie
The hidden soul of harmony,

and produce effects upon the hearers, rarely found in any private performer, and would undoubtedly have insured to her both fame and fortune, if exhibited to the public; but of such destination, her father would never have endured the most distant hint, nor had the idea ever been presented to her mind.

Proud of possessing Seraphina as an elegant novelty, and looking to the time when her own lovely little girls should be as talented and Italianised, as their youthful governess, Lady Emily (now changed from a tender wife, struggling with sorrow and poverty, into a woman of high fashion, desirous of notoriety,) brought forward Seraphina in her parties

with a friendly zeal, that was "not according to knowledge."

The poor girl was at once brought forward into a world to which she was a total stranger; as a kind of idol, to whom even rank might offer incense, and pride might bend; caressed, exhibited, flattered, and extolled, either by the friends who wished to encourage her, or the insidious who sought to injure her; the poor girl was placed on an eminence which menaced her destruction, while it advanced her importance.— Where is the human being that adulation cannot pervert, and luxurious indulgence enervate? Who has a right to expect from eighteen, the wisdom of experience; or the discrimination called for in a dependent, who is expected to perform certain duties which require the most arduous and self-controlling patience, yet be deemed the dispenser of delight, to wealth, talents, beauty, and fashion?

Happy was it for Seraphina, that she united the unsophisticated good sense of her mother, to the towering talents and refined sensibility of her father; still more happy was it for her, that both parents fearing that her early impressions on such subjects might have been wrong, had taken especial pains to render religion a subject of her constant study, and the precepts of Christianity the great rule of her life.

CHAP. VII.

Ill-fated youth, ah! whither wilt thou fly?
No friend, no shelter, now is nigh,
And onward rolls the storm.

BEATTIE.

In pursuance of the plan she was finally compelled by her poverty to adopt, Mrs. Weston wrote to her former guardian, informing him, that as her husband's health had obliged him to try the effects of a milder climate, and her situation was very lonely, she would (if agreeable) spend a few weeks with him, it being now many years since she had enjoyed that pleasure.

In reply, the unyielding old man informed her, "that he was sorry she

should be under the necessity of inventing a falsehood, respecting her husband's health, which was, most probably, as good as it was ever likely to have been in London; that he was well aware, that he had been wishing to travel for the last twenty years, and having now met with some kind of a runagate like himself, had chosen to set off, and leave her to shift as she could; he was, however, willing to receive her from that time till Easter; when, as his housekeeper was going to improve the house it, would not be possible to do with company."

This ungracious permission fortunately reached Mrs. Weston, at the very time when Seraphina was bidding her a hasty adieu; and conscious that the alarmed pride, and wounded feelings, of Orlando, would not fail to resent it, and yet that the total helplessness of his own situation rendered it most expedient to bend to circumstances, she persuaded Mrs. Weston entirely to conceal it; and

to fortify her mind against the evils she might encounter at Mr. Weston's. Seraphina, at this time, had nothing but counsel to give, except a few articles of dress which she had brought in the coach, and a kind message to Orlando, which conveyed a very small portion of those thoughts which occupied her heart respecting him.

It thus happened, that Orlando was deprived of personal intercourse with all he loved, but he was at that happy period of life, when hope can receive nourishment even from the hand of improbability; and combining Seraphina with all his future views of life, rendered him diligent in his business, anxious to acquire all possible knowledge in it, and full of hope as to the issue of his mother's visit.

Alas! these hopes were quashed at a very early period; his mother's first letter was full of complaints; and her second, though it suppressed particular in-

stances of cruel tauntings from her uncle, and unmerited insolence from his servants, yet spoke of her situation as absolutely untenable; and, that she should certainly not remain a single day beyond the period when Gibson would send her money, which she hoped would be Lady-day; from which time, she commissioned him again to seek for a lodging for her.

When Mr. Hanbury heard of Mrs. Weston's return, he lamented it exceedingly, observing, "that although he could not blame a young man for obeying the wishes of a mother so situated, yet really the perpetual demands she had been wont to make upon his time, either by complaints of illness, which must be instantly attended to; notes, which must be immediately answered; or grievances that he could only settle in person; had been a tax upon his services, to which it was difficult to submit; and he advised Orlando, to intreat her, most earnestly, to remain where she was, and struggle

with her difficulties till she subdued them; offering to write, himself, to Mr. Weston, and point out to him the propriety of offering an asylum to the nephew of his wife, during the period of her husband's absence.

These letters were dispatched accordingly, before the time when Mrs. Weston was expected; but unfortunately, Gibson the farmer, was literally true to his appointment, and paid Mrs. Weston her rent on the morning of the day specified, and as she had been very unwell for several days, and therefore, was desirous of being in a home of her own, and was also goaded to take her departure by the housekeeper of her uncle, she set out the very evening of that day, to return to London.

When Mrs. Weston arrived at Stamford, she became so ill, that her fellow passengers insisted upon her remaining there, and the next information Orlando received, was from a medical gentleman

who had been called in, and who informed him, that he wrote to desire his immediate presence, for his mother having ventured to travel under very threatening symptoms, of course there was little chance of her escaping a fever of the most alarming nature.

Poor Orlando, almost wild with distress and horror, ran with the letter in his hand, to Mr. Hanbury, who did not hesitate a moment to furnish him with money for his journey, and advice how to proceed. Upon enquiry, he found that a coach would leave the Bull-and-Mouth at five that evening, and he instantly proceeded to secure a place. In all the agitation of wretchedness, feeling every hour an age, he continued with increasing anxiety, to walk up and down the warehouses, till the clock struck four, when taking a small package of necessaries under his arm, he repaired to the inn.

The unceasing noise and bustle of this

place, every moment receiving or setting-out coaches to every part of the kingdom; offered a little relief to the intensity of Orlando's anxiety, by inducing him to watch every coach, lest in the universal bustle he should lose his own, and as he knew that it waited the arrival of some others, in order that the passengers might be forwarded, he was induced from the feverish anxiety of his mind, to await the emptying of many vehicles, with which he had no concern. Whilst thus employed, he caught the sound of a female voice, familiar to his ear, speaking to the coachman in a low and tremulous tone, desiring him to procure a coach to take her to the very street in which his mother had lately lodged.

Struck with the circumstance, he pressed through all the opposition of wheels, horses, passengers and porters, to obtain a view of the speaker, but this was by no means easy; the lamps were lit, and the lights only served to render

objects in the shade less visible, and he had already spoken to three ladies, none of whom he had ever seen before, when the coach so ordered was announced as waiting, and a figure darted from behind him, as if to answer to the summons.

That figure, although much muffled and wearing a veil, certainly resembled Seraphina, he followed her, and again in a low voice, caught the sound of his mother's number, he could hesitate no longer, but gently laying his hand upon her arm, said, "Seraphina!"

A shriek of horror escaped her, and she clung to the coach-door, in such trembling agitation, that thinking she might faint, he ventured to put his left arm round her, while he lifted up her veil with the right, in order to give her air, and perceived that it was indeed Seraphina, but looking so wild and terrified, that it immediately struck him, that she had learnt the dreadful intelligence in part, and was herself flying to

his mother, not knowing where she was; on speaking to her again, she turned round, and getting at the moment a full view of his face, she gave him a look full of grateful recognition, and uttering a faint, " thank God," burst into a flood of tears.

Coach, after coach, now called for a clear passage, and Orlando not daring to leave the spot, supported her on his arm; and, giving the hackney coachman a shilling, retired, as well as he was able with his almost helpless burden into the yard, where he had scarcely entered, when the coachman bawled aloud, for the passengers of the Rockingham, of which he was one.

" What shall I do? that is the coach I am going in."

" *You* going! tell me then where I shall find your mother?"

" Alas! I am going to *her*, she is now lying dreadfully ill at Stamford."

" We will go together," said Sera-

phina, grasping him with trembling eagerness; "and oh! dear Orlando, let me beseech you, by all the love that exists between our parents, never lose sight of me again, no! not for a moment."

It was now evident that Seraphina was labouring under some affliction to which he was a stranger, and that she spoke under the influence of terror and apprehension; yet, in Orlando's ear, these were the most delightful sounds she had ever uttered, and for a few moments the purest joy suffused his bosom: but he had no time for reply; it was found that there was one inside place by which the lady could be accommodated, and into which, she was instantly handed, and poor Orlando, mounted over her head, felt that he could indeed hazard more than life, for the treasure within.

When the coach stopped, for the passengers to take the only refreshment they would have till morning, Seraphina, who had by this time found that she was

literally returning the way she came, wished to avoid being seen by the people of the house; and, though really wanting refreshment, agreed to walk before the house with Orlando, until they were ready to set out again. She now learnt all the particulars of his mother's case, with which he was acquainted, and was about to reply to his anxious enquiry, as to her unexpected appearance in London, when she gave him a sign, intimating her wish for silence; at the moment, one of the hostlers observed to a post-boy—

"The cattle ha' suffered shamefully, that Wilkins and you drove that there captain with, this morning. I suppose he paid you hansome; but it's very hard upon the dumb craturs."

"That's true; but I could'nt help it: he was such a devil; if we had'nt a drove like mad, I should'nt ha' wondered if he'd a shot us. He was quite one of your fighting chaps, his man said, and never

let nothing stop him, as he'd set his mind on."

"And what was he after in such a giffey now? why, it ben't a fortnight since he went through before, and said as how he was comed from France, and when I was a harnessing this morning, his servant said, they were off to seek a needle in a bottle of hay, he knew, and they would be very like back again before to-morrow was over, or may be to night."—

"Put me in the coach, Orlando," said Seràphina.

Orlando complied with her request, and became her centinel, while he dispatched one of the people for a glass of negus and a rusk; but having now gained some little light, as he apprehended, on poor Seraphina's situation, he felt relieved when they again set forward.

At seven in the morning they reached Stamford; and as the coach stopped at the inn where poor Mrs. Weston was con-

fined, they were immediately admitted to her apartment; but alas! ere they beheld her, they were aware of her dreadful situation, which was that of high fever, attended with delirium, in which she was in a voice far beyond her usual pitch, calling for her son, her husband, and Mrs. Barnard; now beseeching their pity in the most moving language,—now deprecating their cruelty in forsaking her.

For eight days and nights, the terrible anxiety and heart-rending pity experienced by these young people, (who alike attended with unceasing vigilance on the unconscious sufferer,) knew no respite; but after this she became calm, the fever was subdued, but life hung on so feeble a thread, that every breath threatened to dissolve it; and even her joy on learning that her son and Seraphina were present, threatened to be fatal.

Another and another day passed, and she was pronounced out of all immediate danger; but there was reason to fear that

an attack of dreadful rheumatic affection had fallen upon her limbs, which might probably leave her an invalid for life; and a long and dreary confinement was evidently before her, attended inevitably with an expense to which she was utterly inadequate.

When Mrs. Weston's disease had increased to such a degree as to produce delirium, the inn-keeper had placed her purse, which contained between forty and fifty pounds in the hands of the surgeon, who, perceiving that his patient was a gentlewoman, and that she carried about her quite as much cash as any person in affluent circumstances was likely to do, gave orders that not only every care required by necessity and compassion, but those which accorded with wealth, should be assigned her, and the genteel appearance of the young people who so instantly obeyed his injunction, and who alike seemed ready to raise heaven and earth in her behalf, confirmed him in the pro-

priety of his plan. Seraphina accustomed only to the conveniences of wealth, saw nothing in Mrs. Weston's accommodation beyond mere necessaries; but the invalid herself, who had beheld in the house of her rich uncle the utmost frugality, and had left it at a time when she was seriously ill, under the consciousness that her wants would be too scantily administered to, became soon alive to the circumstance; and the first time she was enabled to sit up for an hour, she declared her anxiety to get into lodgings, and insisted upon Orlando's enquiring for some, as she could be removed to them in a sedan-chair.

"We will talk to Seraphina about it; she is gone to make the barley-water herself."

In a moment Seraphina rushed into the room, evidently in great agitation, and having locked the door, threw herself into the first chair, pale and trembling.

" For Heaven's sake, tell me what is the matter?" said Orlando.

" I have seen him — seen Captain Churchill!"

" There is not a man living who shall dare to insult or terrify you thus," cried Orlando, hastening to the door.

" Hold!" said Seraphina, catching him by the arm; " you terrify me still more: stop but a moment. Ah! there he is gone. I saw his carriage at the door."

" What is all this about?" said the invalid. " Surely no one is going to arrest Orlando?"

" Oh! no, my dear Ma'am," said Seraphina recovering; " it is all over now: I was only frightened."

" But you look very pale, my love, and Orlando very red; pray tell me all about it?"

" There is very little to tell; yet it is true that I have suffered much, and am indeed daily suffering from this

wicked man, because I feel perpetual dread of him."

"*Wicked!* then he is not a lover of yours?"

Seraphina's glowing cheeks spoke eloquently, though she only uttered, in almost inarticulate sounds, "that she believed he was something of that kind, but very wicked too."

Orlando paced the floor with rapid steps.

"But I thought all the Churchills went to France?"

"They did, Ma'am: in the first place Captain Churchill went, and wrote thence persuading his brother and Lady Emily to follow. They obeyed his wishes, after sending me into the country; but, to my astonishment, Captain Churchill left them in France, and came down to the Oaks."

"That was very odd; what reason did he give?"

"Oh! his reason — but I cannot talk about him; all I can say is, that after enduring more vexation — in short — at length, much as I loved the children, and highly as I esteem Lady Emily, I was compelled literally to run away; that by chance I got a place in a coach at ——, and in London, on alighting, I found Orlando, who brought me to you, and if I have done *you* good, dear Mrs. Weston, I will not regret any thing that has happened; but I am very unhappy, for I have no other friend, and I fear that I shall be blamed exceedingly."

"Yes," said Orlando, "you will be blamed for coming hither with me, and perhaps they will say — but, dear Seraphina, remember what you said yourself that very night, — "Orlando, never lose sight of me again." Enable me then to fulfil your own wishes; permit me to be your protector from this and every other wicked man; — *marry* me."

Orlando spoke in all the tremor and

tender solicitude awakened by love, sorrow, and recent indignation, and was taking Seraphina's hand, when she suddenly threw herself on her knees by Mrs. Weston, and hid her weeping, blushing face in the lap of the poor invalid, who cast upon her son a look full of the most tender pity and anxiety.

" Mother, dear mother, speak to her if you are able : 'tis true I have never talked of love, but my whole soul has been full of nothing else. Seraphina is the very life of my life ; I love, admire, adore her ; — surely I ought to protect her. 'Tis true I am very poor, — I am even bound to another ! Yes ! I am wretched. I am unworthy of her. I must not ask her to marry me."

Seraphina raised her eyes ; — they met those of Orlando, and told him him that she was not unwilling to share his poverty, and in a moment his distress was removed ; but they still both hung with looks of intense solicitude, on the only

parent to whom they could look for counsel, and who unfortunately was the least able to direct them.

"Indeed, my dears, I don't know what to say to you, you are both so very young; — but to be sure I wouldn't have Seraphina go back for the world to be insulted by that naughty man; and certainly, coming with you, though she did it, poor lamb, from her kindness to me, in the goodness of her heart, may be misconstrued; — indeed I had rather, child, that you married her with nothing, than any body else with ten thousand pounds, and I'm sure if she could bring herself to share my little income, I should be most happy. There is no objection but your youth and your poverty; and for that matter a married life is the best, with all its trials: I was always easy when I had your dear father near me."

With such an ameliorator of all difficulties, no wonder that two young people who were fondly attached, and certainly

awkwardly situated, should unhappily be blind to all consequences, and rush into an engagement to which they fancied themselves impelled, not only by love, but propriety, which was the continual excuse of poor Seraphina, to her own heart, for her good sense could by no means be blind to the dangers which surrounded them. As another fortnight must elapse before they could be united, Orlando wrote to Mr. Hanbury, informing him of the state of his mother, and begging permission to remain with her a short time longer. To this letter Mr. H. replied, by saying, "that as he had been compelled to take an experienced person into the house, to supply Orlando's place, and engage him positively for six months, it was now immaterial to him when he returned, and since he was now a considerable way on the road to his uncle's, perhaps he could not have a better opportunity of visiting him for a short time; he should only add, that he might

serve out the remaining half-year of his time whenever it suited him, but he was too late to render it serviceable for the present season."

This letter unfortunately gave the youthful husband that liberty, which, as a lover, he sighed for. As soon as possible, they were married, and at the same time poor Mrs. Weston removed with them into respectable lodgings; and on the following day, Orlando settled accounts with the innkeeper and the medical man, which not only completely involved the last shilling of his mother's property, but likewise encroached upon Seraphina's purse, which had been amply supplied by Lady Emily, when she took leave of her.

For a few weeks Orlando was very happy; for he was not only gratified in his love, which seemed to increase every hour; but in the exercise of those elegant pursuits which had formed the employment of his life, when his ac-

quaintance with Seraphina commenced. With her he drew, he sang, he walked, he read; her constant attention to his enfeebled parent, the care she manifested in their expenditure, the integrity and the benevolence of her heart, riveted his esteem, as much as her talents captivated his heart and charmed his imagination; and in spite of his cares for the future, he felt rich in the possession of a prize he deemed invaluable.

Orlando, was not, however, so far lost to common sense, and common cares, as not to perceive the daily waste of Seraphina's little store, and to feel the insecurity of his happiness, and he endeavoured to procure employment in the town, either as a clerk in a counting-house, or even as a shopman in the business he had served in; but alas! this was a period in which all business stood still, an awful cloud was again cast over Europe, by the return of Buonaparte from Elba,

and at this time the battle of Waterloo was impending.

When from the public journals, Seraphina became assured, that Captain Churchill had left the kingdom, she ventured to write to the Oaks, desiring the housekeeper to forward her clothes, of which she stood in great need, having only the habit which she wore and a few necessaries with her. She then learnt that Sir Strahan and Lady Emily were at Brussels, but the children were happily under the care of their father's sister, and that from the conduct of Captain Churchill, who had sought her in every direction, a suspicion of the true cause of her flight was entertained. Ah! how soon was the guilty cause of it, called to his great account! He was mortally wounded in the field of Waterloo, but died at Brussels.

Poor Mrs. Weston by no means gathered strength, and it was evident that she needed those restoratives which she

was unwilling to claim, but which the affectionate hearts of her children were anxious to procure her; under such a drain, the purse of poor Seraphina was speedily exhausted, and her last guinea was exchanged before she had been married three months.

Often would poor Mrs. Weston now wish for the contents of that pocket, of which she had been robbed, and the value of her rings and watch were frequently dilated upon—but alas! she had no treasures which she could possibly turn to money, and when she applied to Gibson for a little in advance, she was informed, that so far from being able to send her any at that time, from a variety of misfortunes, he should be utterly unable to supply it at the usual rent day, and he hoped she would have the goodness to grant him time, because he had never yet trespassed upon them, and was loath to do it now.

Orlando left no means whatever un-

tried of gaining employment: he offered himself even to the most menial offices, but no one who looked upon him, could think of engaging him, and he regretted a thousand times, that he had not removed to London whilst it was in his power; as there it would have been possible to have found employment, which, in a country town, was wholly denied. At length, by the sale of his watch, and some trinkets of Seraphina's, they were enabled to leave their lodgings and remove to others in a poor cottage at the edge of the town, where they had at least the satisfaction of sinking into that obscurity which is the refuge of poverty.

From this place Mrs. Weston wrote to her uncle, recapitulating her misfortunes (with all of which he was well acquainted already), and informing him, that from the incapacity of Gibson to advance her any money, she was really driven to great distress, and that if she had not been already assisted, she must

have applied to him before, especially as she could not, in the late state of public affairs, hear from her husband; she therefore earnestly requested him to advance her something for her immediate support.

In the course of a few days, an answer was received, in which Mr. Weston told her, "that she was heartily welcome to the bill he had inclosed; but at the same time he must inform her, that it was the last she need ever expect from him: for that her folly in drawing away her son from his business, and in permitting his marriage with some kind of a proud beggar, was what he never could forgive, at least until he learnt that the young man had fulfilled his agreement, by serving the remainder of his time to his lawful master, which perhaps the inclosed might help him to accomplish."

The bill thus spoken of, proved to be a five guinea country bank-note, and so remarkably dirty and rumpled, that Mrs. Weston could not help believing that it

was not the original inclosure of her uncle, because he was a person remarkable for his exactness; and it was singular that he had not actually mentioned the sum inclosed in his letter. In thanking him for this present, she took care to specify the bill received; but as no further notice was taken, she concluded that her suspicions were false; and could only sigh over the smallness of a sum which was called for immediately, by their pressing necessities, and of course, could not take poor Orlando to London; especially at a time when he was utterly unprovided with the clothing necessary for appearing in Mr. Hanbury's house.

Opposite the place where they now resided, the ground was occupied by a coach-maker, and the road into the town was shortened by passing through his premises. One day, as poor Seraphina was returning from making her scanty

markets, being fearful of the rain, she went through this place at the time the master was lamenting to one of his men, the utter incapacity he experienced of getting the arms on a coach replaced which had been brought there to repair. She listened to this conversation with breathless anxiety, as if she had laid hold on a tangible blessing, yet feared that it would escape her, redoubling her speed, she hastened homeward, and met Orlando at the door.

"The coachmaker is in distress for somebody to paint his pannels; go, my love, and offer yourself directly."

"But, my dear Seraphina, I cannot paint them; I never did any thing in oil in my life."

"No matter; I can: go, I beseech you, and secure the work; don't stand upon terms."

Orlando went; but the coachmaker would not trust his powers till he had proved them; but he readily gave him

the materials which were necessary for the experiment.

In a very short time, Seraphina had painted a specimen sufficient to prove her power, and the person was really glad to employ her; and, although she was poorly paid for her work, yet it became a certain means of support, which was embraced by the distressed family with thankfulness; and the voice of cheerfulness and activity rendered their humble dwelling once more happy. Orlando eagerly took lessons of Seraphina, that he might relieve her, and soon became at least quicker than herself; for her health would not permit her the uninterrupted labour, to which her industry and her affectionate zeal aspired. The ability and dispatch with which every thing they undertook was performed, delighted the master, who seldom received Orlando without shaking his head, and saying, "Ah! young man, I wish I had known you some years ago;" and Or-

lando was sorry to perceive that he was far from happy.

Mrs. Weston, though still delicate, exerted herself now in a way she had never done before; and her health and spirits were evidently the better for it. She prepared all their victuals, mended their clothes, and, even under Seraphina's direction, prepared those which were necessary for the helpless stranger, which in due time, was expected to share their tenderness, and increase their labours. This circumstance, which was of late so appalling to the young parents, now only increased their industry; and the value of the money thus acquired by their labour, gave them a sense of riches in its possession, which they could never have gained by any other means; and often, while the tears were in her eyes, Mrs. Weston would smile to hear their mutual plans of saving for each other, till the dispute of love was settled, by bestowing

the hard-earned boon upon herself, or the future claimant.

Poor young creatures! how soon was even this state of humble happiness to be denied them. Orlando had worked about four months for the coachmaker, and had observed, "that he should henceforward interdict Seraphina from further employment," when on looking out of the window one morning, he observed the shutters of the counting-house were closed; instantly fearing that his employer was ill, and observing one of the workmen standing near with a very sorrowful look, he put on his hat, and went out to make enquiries.

"What is the reason, William, that the place is shut up?"

"Reason enough; it's all over with maister; dear heart!"

"All over! he was in perfect health yesterday."

"Why, he's well now, as far as that goes; but he's a ruined man, — a bank-

rupt, and the place is shut up for ever. I have no means of bread."

"Nor I," internally ejaculated Orlando; and he returned into his house the image of despair.

From this depression, it was the first care of Seraphina to rouse him, which she exerted herself the more to effect, from a consciousness that for her sake he was thus overwhelmed. She reminded him, "that she had saved four guineas from their earnings, for her own future claims, on which they could live a little time, and look round them; and that he could now improve in painting landscape, which he had often wished to do, when he had been at work on his late stupid subjects; and that, no doubt, something would arise, out of which talent and industry might snatch the means of existence."

But, alas! four weeks passed, the winter set in, and no means of help appeared. Mrs. Weston wrote to her uncle,

and her letter was returned to her unopened.

Without saying a word, Seraphina had parted with all the more expensive parts of her clothing, and had laid out the last shilling thus raised; when one morning a little boy, the son of their late employer, ran into the house, and laying a letter on the table, vanished as quickly. Orlando opened it, and read as [illegible]

"At the time my business closed, I was indebted to you a guinea and a half, which I inclose; but which it was not in my power to send you before. I would advise you, by all means, to go to London, where a man of your abilities may make his way with manufacturers in various trades; but depend upon it, you will never get your bread in this place; and I, therefore, earnestly advise you to quit it.

"I am your sincere friend, &c."

This relief, small as it was, was so welcome, that they all felt the advice as powerful as the benefit which accompanied it ; and Orlando starting up, said, "Yes, I will go to London ; I will procure bread for my family, or I will perish in the attempt."

Seraphina completely approved of this plan ; being fully persuaded, that if she were in London, there were many ways in which she could assist her husband ; but at present her removal was not advisable, even if she had had the means, since it was certain that her expenses here were considerably less. She exerted herself, therefore, in making up poor Orlando's parcel ; adding to it two small pictures, which she had painted as copies for him, and which she thought he might dispose of ; but it was with no little agitation she entered on this employment. — It was with a trembling hand and an aching heart, that she expedited the departure of that beloved being, whose

voice was music to her ear, whose love was the sole pleasure, whose tenderness was the only solace of her heart. If young and happy wives, on the eve of becoming mothers, fear to lose the beloved partner, on whom they hang for comfort, when they depart on the common business of life, what must Seraphina feel, whose husband was torn from her by actual want, and who left her a prey to poverty and anxiety, without a single friend, save one who could not relieve her, and whose sympathy only doubled her distress.

The money sent by the coachmaker was in three half-guineas (being, in fact, the markers worn, in better days, in his wife's card-purse): the first, Orlando paid for their lodgings; he took one of the remainder himself; and left the other with Seraphina, who in vain entreated him to take it; but she compelled him to take her watch, which was the only thing of value they had left; and which

had escaped, from the circumstance of its being a small Geneva enamelled watch, which did not suit the sale of the person to whom it was offered.

Thus equipped, on one of the sharpest days in December, poor Orlando set out on foot, for the metropolis; tearing himself from the wife he doated on, the mother he tenderly loved; resolved to submit to all evils, endure all trials, encounter all difficulties, for their sakes; under the full conviction, that the agony of that hour, though most manfully struggled with, could never be exceeded.

CHAP. VII.

And from the prayer of want, and plaint of woe,
O never, never, turn away thine ear;
Forlorn in this bleak wilderness below,
Ah! what were man, should heaven refuse to hear!
BEATTIE.

WHEN Orlando was really gone; when his hurried steps could no longer be traced, and his tall slight form was completely lost in the distance, Seraphina suffered the bitter tears she had so long restrained to burst from her eyes in the transports of overwhelming grief, until she perceived how much her sorrow added to that of Mrs. Weston, when she sought to conceal it, and even to "comfort her comforter;" but as the tide of feeling would not be suppressed

she continued to gaze out of the window, and thus avert her grief-worn countenance.

A little girl stood by the window curtseying, and endeavouring to draw her attention to something she had to sell in a band-box. Seraphina shook her head, and said, "No child, no:" but, as the girl did not move, and looked very cold, that compassion, which even sorrow could not banish from her heart, induced Seraphina to open the window to speak to the child, though it was, of course, only to repeat her refusal.

"I have but this one left," said the girl, taking a muslin frill out of her box, "and I will sell it you for six-pence — for three-pence — I will *give* it *you*, if you please to have it."

"Give it me, child! what do you mean?"

"Oh! I would give it you, if it was ten times as much, for all the good you did mammy last summer."

Seraphina wiped her eyes, and thought she had some recollection of the girl.

"I thought you'd a knaed me, ma'am: 't was me as you gave the broth to so often, for my mammy, when you was fine folks, and lived up by the church; and madam sent her some brown stuff in a bottle, that did her a power a good; and the gentleman, God bless him! (he was a gentleman then,) once gived me half-a-crown, he did, and it quite set us up."

Utterly unable to speak, Seraphina mechanically took the frill into her hand, on which the happy, grateful child, was shutting the lid of her box, and walking away, with a hasty step, as if she feared recall.

"Stay a moment," said Seraphina, "do you make these frills, or your mother?"

"Neither of us, ma'am. My mother is a washer-woman, and can't sew neatly, no more can't I: it was Sally Froster as used to make 'em, and I sold them for her; but she's married this morning, and

gone a great way off, and so she gave me this, because it was the last, and the box too, which was very good of her."

Seraphina had frequently endeavoured to get plain work in Stamford, but had never been able, and she now eagerly seized on the idea of making these frills; and on further examining their construction, resolved to attempt it. The child was exceedingly rejoiced at being at once enabled to resume her own share of the business, and to talk with the "beautiful lady;" and was still more delighted when told that she might come an hour every day, and be taught to sew and to read.

In another hour, Seraphina had purchased her muslin, and was busied in preparing it for sale, and in giving directions to her mother-in-law, who was eager to assist her, though habitually slow in all her movements. The whisper of her heart, "perhaps I shall be able to send Orlando something," encouraged her to proceed; and in this hope she was enabled to labour till midnight, when

she retired to her lonely pillow, after a fervent prayer for blessings on the wanderer's head.

We will now follow that wanderer.

For many a weary mile Orlando pushed on, regardless of the light sleet which blew in his face, and rendered his walking a double labour, until the middle of the day; when finding his feet become sore, and his strength fail, he turned into the first house of entertainment he met with, and obtained the refreshment he so greatly required. Unused to such extraordinary exertion, his late employment having been altogether sedentary, he was now sensible from the pain and swelling of his feet, that he should never be able to walk the whole of the way, and that he had better spend a portion of his money in getting a lift upon the coach. This resolution it became the more necessary to adopt, because the day increased in severity, and the sleet became a heavy snow.

Compelling himself to rise, he walked forward a little way upon the road, when he heard the coach advancing, and although neither by nature or habit calculated for making a bargain, yet he compelled himself to do it now, and the coachman agreed to take him for three half-crowns, to a small town at a considerable distance, where he would be set down at such a time as would enable him to procure accommodation for the night.

The evening proved dreadfully stormy; and when they changed horses, the coachman appealed to poor Orlando's generosity for a glass of brandy: he could not refuse him, though not a drop passed his own lips, and he was at last set down in a long straggling village, about eleven o'clock, with the dreadful consciousness that he had only four-pence halfpenny in his pocket, and that he knew not where to lay his head.

" Still he was in a town, he had his bundle in his hand, and in the morning,

some person would be found willing to purchase what he might be compelled to part with; and his wet, deplorable situation was such as could not fail to elicit the pity of his fellow-creatures."

Orlando turned into the first public-house he saw open: the kitchen was full of people; and it did not appear that misery, and cold, and hunger, though strikingly visible in the intelligent countenance and drooping frame of our traveller, was a recommendation to his fellow-creatures. "No man bade him welcome," by look or gesture; the room was full of people of the lowest order; a party of soldiers were near the fire; loud singing, obstreperous oaths, and violent altercations were heard on every side.

"Can I have a room," said Orlando, "and a bed?"

"No; every place is full," was the reply, and in a tone which proved the fiat inevitable.

Orlando felt ill, sick at heart: he looked

round for a chair, but there was none; at the same moment a pint of ale was put into his hand, saying "he had called for it," as a hint that he ought to have done so.

Orlando put it to his lips, but conscious that he could not taste it, he offered it to a serjeant near whom he was standing, saying, "Will you be so good as to drink this for me," at the same time he laid down his halfpence on the table.

The serjeant drank his health, and offered his chair, which was indeed acceptable; and when he had finished the draught, said, "I perceive, Sir, you are quite overdone: I know how to feel for those who have had a long day's march: I'm an old soldier, Sir."

The voice of kindness in such a moment as this entirely overcame Orlando, he became of a livid paleness.

"Take my arm, Sir, and go into the air: by the way, I believe I can procure you good night's lodging at a very decent house, the Woolpack; for I'm a bit of a favorite with the maid, you must know."

"You will do me a great service," said Orlando.

"'Tis a particular night with them, for they shut up early; but a person was to go thence in the coach, I remember, so I hope we shall catch them: the house is kept by a very respectable old woman and her niece, who are well off in the world, so they can afford to be particular."

They knocked at the door, which was not opened, till the serjeant had duly announced, "a very respectable person, as he would answer for," on which his conductor vanished; and Orlando entered a room, so sweet, and clean, and quiet, that the very sight refreshed him. A small table with a cloth on it as white as snow was placed before an elderly woman, dressed with Quaker-like neatness, and a countenance full of kindness.

"Nancy, take the gentleman's wet coat, and bring dry slippers this minute: here, Sir, take a single mouthful of my

negus, 'tis warm and good, and you see I have not tasted it, and put your feet on the fender."

In a very few minutes, a small delicate veal cutlet was put before Orlando; and though long fasting and cold had a little time since made the thoughts of food abhorrent, he eat this with pleasure, and was then shown to an excellent bed, on which extreme fatigue, and the pain of his feet, forbade repose, even if the recollection of his being pennyless, and of his suffering wife, would have permitted him to sleep.

When Orlando came down stairs, he found breakfast in a pleasant little parlour, and Miss Nancy full of anxious enquiries as to his health and repose; which poor Orlando answered in so vague a manner, that she was sure he was unwell, and said "she would make breakfast for him."

Whilst this was doing, the aunt came in, and was equally civil: the kindness

and respectability of these people only rendered Orlando the more wretched; and to conceal his chagrin, and gather time for consideration, he took a pencil and paper from his pocket, and seemed to be writing.

But the eye of Nancy followed his unconscious pencilling, and she perceived that the features of a face, the form of a flower arose, from it. "Well, aunt! how very odd: I do think we have got hold of the right person at last."

"Pray, Sir, will you excuse me asking if you ben't what one may call an artist, or a painter of some sort?

Orlando replied, "that he certainly could paint a little."

The old woman instantly left the room, but in a few minutes returned with the maid, each bearing a ponderous picture, on which had once been delineated the forms of her parents, but they were so incrusted by dust, oil, and varnish, as to be scarcely visible.

"You see these precious pictures," said the old woman: "they want cleaning shockingly, and I cannot bring myself to send them to London, for fear of any thing happening to them: if you will do them for me, I will give you two guineas, and all the best the house affords, if you stay for a fortnight."

"I will," said Orlando, but he could say no more: the sudden, the overpowering emotion given by this relief was too much for him: he ran into his chamber, and throwing himself on his knees, while tears of joyful gratitude impeded his utterance, thanked the All-wise Disposer for a blessing, which appeared to be an earnest of that providential care, which "suffereth not a sparrow to fall to the ground" unheeded.

Orlando arose, so refreshed in spirit, that he lost the sense of his yesterday's fatigue, his sleepless night, and even the severe cold which he had taken. He entered on his task with avidity; and,

although it was indeed a hard one, yet at the close of the following day, when he exhibited the pictures to the mistress of the house, in all their original lustre, her surprise and delight, the unaffected tribute of tenderness paid to the memory of her parents, in thus gazing on their portraits, would alone have well repaid a heart like his, had not his necessities claimed a more palpable reward. She insisted on his remaining another night, and said she would also engage that her neighbour should take him twenty miles on his way to London, in his comfortable chaise-cart.

Orlando spent as happy an evening as he could do without Seraphina, to whom he now wrote an account of the transaction, intending to inclose her the half of his prize the moment he received it.

" I shall always rejoice to see any body at my house as you belong to; so pray say so in your letter," said the mistress,

"if you be writing to your father or brother."

"I am giving a line to my wife."

"Wife!" said Miss Nancy, becoming pale as death: "wife, and so young!"

Nancy left the room, followed by her aunt: the same attention was still shown him, but an air of sorrow pervaded every thing: the following morning, however, he received the money, sent one pound to Seraphina, put the other in his pocket, gave the maid the shillings, with his service to the good serjeant, and then taking a farewell, which might be called almost affectionate, of the aunt and niece, departed amid thanks, tears, and good wishes.

The chaise-cart was not rapid in its movements, and as days were at the shortest, it was becoming gloomy when Orlando left it, but as he was now within fifteen miles of London, he determined to walk forward until he arrived with-

in such a distance as would enable him to take one of the short stages. In pursuing this plan, he overtook two ill-looking men, each carrying a heavy stick in his hand. Orlando recollected, with some pain, that he had put Seraphina's watch that morning, into his pocket, instead of his bundle, where it had been till then.

It very naturally occurred to him, to feel that it was safe: the action drew the eye of the man who was nearest to him, and in another moment, lifting his stick in a menacing position, he demanded his watch and his property.

"Neither," replied Orlando, darting forward, and catching at the weapon which he finally wrested from the hand of the ruffian, who grappled with him and fell upon him. Alert as courageous, Orlando soon recovered his feet, when seeing the other robber prepared to strike him a terrible blow, he sprung from under the weapon, and conscious of his in-

ability to encounter two enraged desperadoes, trusted to flight for safety, and had the good fortune to distance them both: but, alas! when he had time to recover himself in the first village, he found that his bundle had become their prey.

As all hope of recovery was vain, and a new motive for economy was presented in its loss, Orlando durst not venture to indulge in taking the stage: he slept in the cheapest lodging he could procure, and about noon the following day reached the metropolis, under that sinking of the spirits which every man so brought up must feel, who has not the comfort of a single change of linen to turn to.

It had been agreed, that Seraphina should direct to him at Davidson's, the grocer, and, although it was hardly possible that she could have written, yet thither he bent his steps, not bearing, in his present forlorn plight, to be seen near

Foster-lane. He had, however, the mortification to meet one of Mr. Hanbury's porters, who informed him, that he had just set off his master to Ireland, where he was likely to have a long stay, being the assignee to a bankrupt case of great importance. This news was another source of uneasiness, and with an increased weight upon his heart, he pursued his melancholy way.

In passing through Greek-street, his eye was attracted by some chairs of singular construction, the back formed a lyre, which rested on a garland of flowers, beautifully painted; he stopped to examine them.

"You look earnestly at these chairs, young man; have you ever been engaged in work of this kind?" said the owner.

"Never, Sir, but I understand it: I have painted coach-pannels."

"Come in, and let me talk to you. I am at present in great trouble for the want of, a person to finish these chairs;

I have two dozen in an unfinished state, and the lady who belongs to them is in a violent hurry."

In a very short time Orlando had made his agreement, and engaged to begin his work on the morrow; and he now, with a lightened heart, stepped forward to Davidson's, where there was indeed a letter from Seraphina, the first he had ever received from her. Oh! what a prize to the poor forlorn wanderer; and what a letter! how full of tenderness! of hope-inspiring kindness! of resignation to Heaven! of mental energy! of unbounded love! Yes, this letter contained the fruits of poor Seraphina's labours, and the whole of her property too; for when she found that her half-guinea had become twenty-two shillings, she could not resist sending Orlando a pound-note, thus despoiling herself of the means of continuing her new-found business; but happily for her, his love being not less active, the means of life were again pre-

sented her just after her own letter was dispatched, in the manner we have already seen.

Orlando was indefatigable in his labours; and, although his first efforts were rather promising than satisfactory, the impossibility of finding an immediate substitute enabled him to hold the work till he became really expert, and he received for his labour such a recompense as enabled him to gain a few necessaries to supply his lost bundle, even the first week; and during the second, he laid a plan for so far abridging his personal expenses, as to enable him to transmit the sum of five pounds to his wife, against the awful hour which was approaching.

For several days Orlando had been sensible of a pain and oppression in his breast, which he attributed to the struggle he had had with the villain who robbed him, and he soon became aware of its increasing to a distressing degree; but he neither named that circumstance nor

his loss to Seraphina: all his letters were of a cheering kind; and when at length he was enabled to remit her the sum for which he had unremittingly laboured, though he could not help feeling how hard it was to be parted from her at such a season of extreme anxiety, yet the sense of having done his utmost to help her, and of the real utility of his efforts, was consolatory to his soul.

But alas! the chairs were now finished; and his late employer, though perfectly willing to engage him, could not, from the tardiness of his workmen, put any more immediately into his hands, but he told him to come every morning to see if they were ready. In the unfortunate leisure thus given, he was slowly returning to his lodgings, when he beheld, by mere chance, the two little pictures of which he had been robbed, in the window of a pawnbroker.

Orlando immediately entered and enquired how they came there, but obtained

no satisfactory answer. He asked the price, and was answered a guinea; on which, being very desirous to possess them, he offered to leave his watch as a deposit for the money.

"I believe," said the master of the shop, "it is my duty to detain this watch, and have you secured, as I was warned against a person who might probably offer a watch to me, with ladies' trinkets like this."

It immediately struck Orlando, that the wretches who had robbed him had thrown this new evil in his thorny path; and on his suggesting this idea, the pawnbroker said, "it was possible, for although the man of whom he bought the pictures was not the person who gave him that caution, yet he thought they were connected; and how am I," said he, "to be certain that you are not one of the gang, though you have had a quarrel perhaps."

Orlando stood in silence, proud yet

wretched, revolving what was best to be done; the picture was replaced in the window, the watch was in the pawnbroker's hand, when a gentleman passing was struck with the former, and enquired the price.

This enquiry led to a detail of all which had passed, for the person was a printseller of great importance, and personally known to the tradesman, to whom he immediately spoke in vindication of poor Orlando, observing, "that he was one of a race who often played the fool, but seldom the rogue, and were more 'sinned against than sinning;'" still the pawnbroker did not like to part with the beautiful watch, and he sought to retain it, by saying,

"But you wished for a little money upon your watch, didn't you?"

"Not except in purchase of the pictures; and as this gentleman, who has spoken so justly and so kindly for me, seems inclined to take them, I will give them up."

Mr. C —— told him to keep his watch by all means, and when they came out of the pawnbroker's, not only gave him a commission for two other pictures, for which he promised him ten pounds, but advanced him a couple in order to purchase materials; at the same time, insisting upon receiving them within a given period.

Orlando hastened to buy materials; and then finding the postman was in the streets, called at Davidson's, as it was possible there might be a letter for him.

There was indeed a letter from his mother; Orlando opened it with a trembling hand, — it hailed him as a father.

Let those who can condemn the youthful parent, the doating husband, that, forgetful of his poverty, his distance, his engagement, the severity of the weather, and the sense of indisposition which still hung over him, he only kissed the letter again and again; and instantly setting out for the city, soon found himself on the top

of that very vehicle, where, not a twelvemonth before, he had journeyed with her, whom he now felt to be indeed "a wife far dearer than a bride."

The night was cold, and Orlando suffered severely in the course of it, but at the end of his wearisome journey all was forgotten: — he knelt by the bed of Seraphina; he beheld her pale but smiling countenance; he pressed his lips on the velvet cheek of that little helpless one, which was only less dear than herself; and he beheld his beloved mother welcome his child with smiles, tears, and blessings, delighted with the very cares it caused her.

When Seraphina had the power of observing Orlando, she was struck with his altered looks, and sorry to observe that he was troubled with a little cough, which teazed him perpetually, and which she imputed to a severe cold caught by coming down to visit her; but Orlando himself made light of it, and more than

ever anxious to secure the means of life for her, and the power of enjoying her society, he applied himself with the utmost diligence to the pictures ordêred by his late liberal friend; and, conscious of her power to assist him, Seraphina, in her anxiety to aid him, retarded her own recovery. Happily for them, at this period, Gibson remitted some money to Mrs. Weston, which was of the greatest use to them both; and in the hope of being useful to her dear Orlando, and supporting the innocent being, which had first awoke in her heart its most hallowed affections, Seraphina was induced to take that nourishment, and seek for that medical help which her situation rendered necessary.

At the end of a month, the pictures being finished, and Mrs. Weston having divided her now reduced store with them, Seraphina accompanied her husband to London; and on presenting the pictures, they were not only approved, but an-

other of larger dimensions was ordered by Mr. C——, who could not help observing, that Orlando was dreadfully altered during his absence. On calling at the upholsterer's, where he had painted the chairs, the observation was re-echoed; and with an air of more sympathy than wisdom or delicacy, the person exclaimed, " bless my life! the poor creature's in a galloping consumption."

These words struck upon Seraphina's ear like the sentence of death, nor could she rest till she had procured medical advice for Orlando, which was, however, of little benefit; he became every day more weak and thin, his appetite failed entirely, and it was the bitter agony of his wife to be oppressed by extreme poverty, in the only case when riches were desirable; every day to be conscious of living in the midst of delicacies, money only could procure, and yet not to obtain them for a being so tenderly beloved, so fondly doated on, oh! this is indeed to

drink the very dregs of the cup of penury; it is wringing out the poison from the bitter chalice of want and misery.

Every day letters were now expected from the travellers, whom they could not address at this time, because they knew that they were removed either to Florence or Naples; and upon enquiry, Mr. Hanbury had not yet returned from Ireland; so that Seraphina had no help but what arose from Mr. C—— the printseller, who not only took every work which was produced by their joint labour, but always advanced the money called for by their necessities. Alas! with a sick husband, and a child at her breast, few indeed were the hours which Seraphina could devote to the steady pursuit of an art, which calls for an eye undimmed by tears, — a hand unshaken by anxiety; and her benevolent employer, at length perceiving how utterly impossible it was for her to do justice to her own powers, one day put twenty pounds into her hand,

and told her to set off with her husband to Bristol, and pay him by her works when it was in her power.

"And I will give you a letter," he added, "to a physician at Bath, where you had better stop for a day or two; he once saved my life, and who knows what he may do for you."

"Seraphina had frequently heard her mother speak of English people, who travelled in Italy for a decline, and she endeavoured to recollect if any amongst them recovered. Her memory did not furnish her with any instance, save that of poor Orlando's father, who had been spoken of as perfectly well the summer before; and on this, she endeavoured to build up those hopes, which in *early* life ever answer to the call; the invalid, himself, was delighted with the thoughts of his removal, and having written an account of their intention, and confessed the cause of it, to poor Mrs. Weston, they lost no time in setting out.

Consistent with that steady affection, and unceasing vigilance of love, which influenced every action of Seraphina's life, she now placed Orlando in the inside of the coach, laying her infant in his lap, and ventured herself in the basket. — "When the mind's at ease, the body's delicate;" a heart aching with such intense solicitude, a mind busied with so many cares, living so much in another's life, seems frequently endowed with strength to suffer beyond all common calculations. But, alas! her child had not the mother's support, and its constitution (ever delicate) was injured by the journey, and before their arrival at Bath, it was evidently exceedingly ill.

Conscious that she could not proceed farther, Seraphina thought herself very fortunate in being able to procure a small cottage in the environs of Bath, which being calculated for *poor* invalids, was let at a very reasonable rent. Orlando was, in his own apprehension, better for

his journey, and the physician to whom he was recommended, (considering his situation as perfectly hopeless,) assured him that he could not be situated better than where he was, as his home was sheltered by Beechum Cliff, and that during his stay, he would give him all necessary advice; so there he determined to remain for the ensuing summer.

Although times yet continued very unfavourable for farmers, in the month of May, Gibson contrived to pay Mrs. Weston the arrears of her rent; and the moment she obtained it, and was thereby enabled to leave Stamford, she lost not a moment in hastening to her son, to whom her presence was exceedingly welcome, on various accounts. The poor child was now languishing, and in the beginning of autumn, it sunk into that grave which its father was every day advancing to meet with rapid strides. Yet he still struggled with his fate; still cheered the partner of his sufferings, and endeavour-

ed, with her, to avert the poverty which the long sickness of his child, even more than his own, had occasioned.

It will be recollected, that this summer, (1816,) though rainy and cheerless, was never subject to those excessive heats which destroy, as by a pestilential gale, the withering form of patients like Orlando; he was, therefore, enabled, day after day, to amuse the wearisome hours for a little at a time, by a book or by his pencil; and when poor Seraphina had laid her first-born in the earth, and for the sake of him who was now the undivided object of her care, struggled to hide the grief she could not conquer, she sought by employing herself, to repay their debt to Mr. C——, whom she could not bring herself to intrude upon further, until the first was removed. The family had but one purse, for Mrs. Weston knew her money was better managed by Seraphina than herself; but alas! the

length of her journey, and the debts she had unavoidably contracted before her income arrived, had soon exhausted it, and the people with whom they dealt at Bath, were unable to give them credit; being the little shopkeepers nearest their own habitation. Under such circumstances, Seraphina felt it her duty, to exert herself to the utmost; and about a week after the child's death, she completed two pictures, which, like many others, her unhappy husband had began, but was unable to finish.

It was, however, a pleasant thing to him, to varnish these pictures, and having done so, being impatient to see them finished, he placed them in the window to dry. They had been there only a short time, when they caught the eye of a gentleman who was passing, and who, after admiring them some minutes, entered the cottage, and enquired, "If they were to be sold;" adding, "that he was himself an artist, and should be

happy to purchase them, if they were of a moderate price."

Orlando was at this time laid down on the humble couch, where he was compelled to pass many hours of the day, and therefore Seraphina answered for him, "that the pictures were part of a general order, it was true, but they were not actually sold." Whilst she spoke, another person entered the open door, and making a motion to Orlando, requested to speak with him in the adjoining kitchen, to which he led the way.

Orlando rose to obey the summons, his cheek reflushing with hectic heat. Seraphina interfered, saying, "she could do as well, her husband must not leave the room. The person whom she addressed, replied, "that was impossible, he was commissioned to arrest her husband, for the funeral expenses of their child."

Orlando again sunk upon the couch, gasping for breath, and evidently unable

to speak; for shame to be so caught before the stranger, was added to the distress of the circumstance.

"I will give you ten pounds for these pictures," said the benevolent artist, "immediately, which is all I have with me, and if a little more is required, I will send it to you."

But that was sufficient, the terrific intruder was soon gone, the visitor took his purchase home with him, after ordering another pair from subjects which he chose, and the certainty that he would immediately pay for them, from having seen how little now remained in Seraphina's purse, induced her to work with yet more diligence, in which even her suffering husband united. Mr. H—— frequently called upon them during the progress of their work, and his society never failed to enliven the melancholy hours; but alas! it was evident to him, and to all around, that every exertion rendered the invalid still worse, and that

either the late shock from his arrest, or the labour to which he had subjected himself, had precipitated the fate which awaited him.

When Mr. H—— called to pay for the pictures, he mentioned as the news of the day, "that in about a week a balloon would be sent off from Sidney Gardens, in which the most intrepid of modern aeronauts intended to sail," and observed to the ladies, "that a very fine view of it would be obtained from the hill just above *them*."

Poor Orlando from this time talked incessantly of the balloon, when his increasing infirmities allowed him to talk at all; and although Seraphina, with most praiseworthy vigilance, had already began another picture, which she positively determined should go to London to their first friend, and sought to interest him in its progress, she found it impossible to divert him from the earnest desire he had adopted of seeing the ascent of the balloon. With all that self-

deception so common to his complaint, he calculated on an accession of strength, in every intermediate day, and that as he could now walk so many yards on the road, by that time he should manage an equal number up the hill, from whence he would behold it.

Desirous of yielding him every gratification in their power, when the day really arrived, Seraphina and his mother proposed that they would take him in a chaise to the gardens, but this he would not hear of. His plan was laid, and with a quiet but determined pertinacity, he insisted on following it; "I will go out in good time" said he, "with Seraphina for one arm, and this good stick for the other; we will carry the drops and some water, and I am certain I can manage it."

Seraphina's heart sunk at the thought of the sufferings, disappointment, perhaps death, which he had thus chalked out for himself, ; but she could not bring

herself to oppose his wishes; that beseeching eye had so long looked to her for all it desired, so long regarded her with gratitude as unbounded as its love, that she could not now dispute even its most inconsistent entreaty.

In trembling solicitude, the mother remained at home ready to receive them, and a humble assistant was ordered to follow them, to be ready in case of weariness to call a chair; and thus guarded, they began to ascend the path.

Every step was a dreadful toil; pause, succeeded pause, each more lengthened than the last, and respiration was at length so exceedingly difficult, that Seraphina observed that it was utterly impossible to proceed. Orlando pointed to a little knoll at a very small distance, as a place where he would be content to rest, and towards that, his patient conductor led him.

But ere they attained it, the guns were fired, which announced the ascent of the

balloon. Orlando yet pressed forward, he reached the wished-for spot; and Seraphina pointed out the object his eye sought for, majestically rising above the city, and bearing directly towards the place on which they stood; supporting him with her utmost strength, he was enabled clearly to discern the bold adventurer, and as he passed over their heads, with the enthusiasm peculiar to ardent minds, the enfeebled invalid endeavoured to hail him; but in the very attempt he became almost suffocated, a violent fit of coughing ensued, and for some moments, both Seraphina and the attendant, who now flew to her assistance, feared that even life itself was gone, so terrible was the exhaustion which succeeded.

But when Orlando had taken some drops, when he was really able to return, he was sensible of being more easy, and of breathing with more freedom than he had done for many months, and Sera-

phina herself observed that he spoke with his former voice. Mrs. Weston received them with trembling apprehension, but was relieved and surprised, on being asked by her son for a cup of coffee and a toast, "as he was very hungry."

Orlando, to their utter surprise, ate the toast, and then laid down and fell into the easiest slumber he had enjoyed for many months; during which time, Seraphina sent for their friendly physician, whom she trembled to behold, lest she should learn that this change was only preparatory to a much greater.

Orlando awoke refreshed, and again desired food, observing that the pain and weight upon his breast was gone, and that his appetite was good. The physician arrived, and after various questions, pronounced decidedly, that the imposthume which had threatened his life, was gone, that his case had been one of the most extraordinary nature, and that in a very short time, with that

care and prudence which he had no doubt would be taken of him, his health would be perfectly restored. He permitted him for the present, to take only a small portion of light food, and waited till he was put to bed, when he left the house, saying, " that he had not the slightest doubt of his convalescence in the morning." *

Orlando slept — no fever scorched him, no cough disturbed him, a respiration soft as infancy parted his unparched lips, and the mother and wife, who during the live-long night, still watched in trembling hope and fearful doubt, his unwonted slumbers, at length became assured that the cup of happiness was indeed offered to their apprehensive lips; grasping each others hands, they knelt down together; their silent tears of joy and mutual congratulation fell upon each others bosom, and in silence, their heart-felt gratitude, their profound ador-

* This remarkable case occurred to an artist now living.

ation, ascended to the throne of heaven, and mingled with celestial music.

Not less fervid was the pious exultation of the late invalid, when he became indeed sensible that he had shaken off disease as a noisome mantle, and that health and strength were now revisiting his shrunken form, and reanimating his withered veins; — his step regained its elasticity, his figure, its commanding height; and he soon required the warning voice of his ever-watchful Mentor, to remind him "that he was yet very weak, and must be exceedingly guarded."

But Orlando did not need any one to tell him, that the first visit he ought to make should be to the House of God; for the language of his heart was, "I will take the cup of salvation, and call upon the name of the Lord;" and on the second Sunday, from the time we speak of, he was enabled to accompany his wife and mother to church, and stay the communion without being exhausted, and in

the course of the following week he might be pronounced nearly well.

His appearance at church was, however, that of a being so shadowy, so attenuated, and yet so lovely, that he appeared to be scarcely an inhabitant of earth; yet the ardour of his devotions, the entire abstractedness of his air, which never seemed to mingle for a moment with surrounding objects, except sometimes in a glance to his wife or mother, in which it was evident he felt that bond of sympathy with them which is beyond all others; rendered his manners still more an object of interest than his person. A gentleman sat near him who had himself been ill, and this circumstance, perhaps, made him think more of Orlando than others; he spoke of him often in the course of the day to his lady, and on the following morning, happening to see the artist who had befriended Orlando, he mentioned him as possessing the finest profile he had ever seen, and ex-

pressed a great desire to find out who he was.

"It must be my young friend the artist," said Mr. H——. "I had no idea he would ever live to get to church again."

"If he is an artist, I have an excuse for going with you; let us go together and call upon him."

The interest Orlando had thus excited when unknown, was considerably increased when Mr. Wilmington (the gentleman in question), beheld him, and heard his simple, yet eloquent account of the circumstance by which he had regained his health, or his animated spirit-stirring description of those feelings which were now awakened by every circumstance which unfolded the beauties of nature to his view, and restored the powers of art to his long paralysed exertions. Mr. Wilmington was a man of large fortune, an amateur, and a patron; and it was therefore not surprising, that he accorded a

share of encouragement to Orlando, and persuaded himself to believe, that in his early efforts he saw the germ of that high genius so rarely found, and which his heart, rather than his judgment, most probably accorded to Orlando.

"You shall paint me a pair of small pictures, like those of my friend H—'s," said Mr. Wilmington, "and put them in frames suitable for them."

By the time these pictures were finished, Orlando was able to take them to the Upper Crescent himself. Mr. Wilmington expressed himself satisfied with them, approved his expedition, and engaged him to make a copy of a very valuable picture, for which he offered to give him fifty pounds; — "but I will pay you *now* for these," he added; "What is the price?"

Orlando answered, the pictures were ten pounds, the frames were five; of course fifteen pounds was the money due.

Mr. Wilmington wrote a check which which he gave to Orlando, who took it, and immediately departed.

When Orlando got at a little distance from Mr. Wilmington's house, he opened the check to see upon what banking-house it was drawn, and perceived that Mr. Wilmington had by mistake concluded the pictures were each fifteen pounds, as he had drawn the check for thirty; he returned immediately, and showed him in what the error had consisted.

"I will rectify it," said Mr. Wilmington; and, on giving him another folded check into his hand, he said, "Take this, my good friend, and be assured there is *now* no mistake: dine with me at five next Friday; but make all the haste you can to get your check discounted at the bank, as it may be useful to you *immediately*."

Orlando was indeed sensible, that if he dined with Mr. Wilmington, his money would all be required in procuring ne-

cessary habiliments; he therefore hastened to the bank, presented his check, and received, to his utter astonishment, sixty pounds.*

Mr. Wilmington's emphatic *now*, — his benevolent smile, — his manner of hastening him out of the house, all united to prove that the change in the draft had been intentional, and Orlando reached home, glowing with gratitude and pleasure, which was increased when participated by his wife and mother; and while his heart yet throbbed with its first emotions, he wrote a letter to his benefactor, which proved not only the acuteness of his sensibility, but the high polish of a mind becoming the son of a poet and a painter.

One invitation led to many. Mr. Wilmington's circle comprehended the wealthy, the great, the literary, and the fashionable; — all were likely to befriend

* This was literally the conduct of the late Mr. W—— of Bath, to a young man whom he patronised, and to whom he afterwards bequeathed a thousand pounds.

Orlando, but the last class were his more immediate patrons, for with them he was adopted, not only as a novelty, but on account of his personal advantages, which were at this time the more remarkable from the brilliant glow of returning health, and the striking animation which pervaded his features and his form; to which might be added, some portion of musical knowledge, a pleasing voice rendered effective by fine taste; and powers of conversation (when drawn out) much above the generality of even well informed men.

Bath was beginning to fill for the winter season, and the more Orlando was seen, the more he was admired, and an invitation to one gay party was only the prelude to another. Seraphina, who was, in the first instance, delighted to see her beloved husband placed in that society where he alone could be duly estimated, and which she wished ever to see him move in, became now alarmed: she

trembled for its *future* effects on so young a man, whose domestic habits and conjugal affections could hardly fail to be injured by being taken from his simple pleasures to those beyond his sphere; and she felt the *present* consequences to be deplorable, as Orlando had no time for painting, or even storing his mind, as she well knew a painter's should be stored; and she perceived also, that his gay friends, contenting themselves with the name of patrons, never really assisted his endeavours to establish himself as an artist.

Thus circumstanced, Seraphina laboured nearly alone, and although Orlando never went out without grieving at the thoughts of leaving her at home, nor watched the progress of the picture, without lamenting how small a portion of it was done by him; yet he found himself wound in toils which, though another day he should be able to elude, were for the present moment unavoidable. Under

these circumstances, he finished the painting, or rather saw it finished, ordered by his real friend.

A severe shock awaited him on its delivery, for he found that a few hours before, his truly generous patron, Mr. Wilmington, had been seized with a return of that complaint which had formerly afflicted him, and was considered already in danger. On learning he was in the house, he insisted on seeing him; and from that time, such was his evident predilection for his society, that Orlando was seldom absent from him many hours for a time, until his death, which took place within a fortnight.

Orlando, as might be expected, was deeply affected with this circumstance; nor did the information that his generous friend had left him a handsome legacy, lessen but increase the acuteness of that grief with which he lamented him; but as his feelings could only be duly esti-

mated in his own home, to that place only their developement was confined.

In a short time, Orlando received from Mr. Wilmington's executor, the fifty pounds which was due to him, and the information that a twelvemonth was given, in which all legacies were to be paid. There was a regularity and coldness in the proceeding, which proved that his successor had nothing to do with art, or artists, or at least that Orlando had no longer a house there; and he remarked, "that it was a blow to his outset in life, which would retard his progress; for it might be long before he met with a friend so partial to his pencil as the last."

"But, my dear Orlando, you are not a painter; your necessities have made you such; but now they are removed, you will undoubtedly return to your own business."

"You are well aware, Seraphina, that my inclination, not less than my necessi-

ties, point me towards a profession for which I always had a great regard, and, I trust, sufficient talents."

"Pardon me, my love, if I speak plainly: you have sufficient talents, it is true, for a tolerable painter, but I have heard my father so often decry mediocre talents in art, that I cannot bring myself to think you should positively engage in the profession, without I was assured, that the world would feel for you the same esteem with which I regard you myself. However, there is time to consider that by-and-bye; at present our first care must be to go to London, that you may be enabled to resume your situation at Mr. Hanbury's."

"I have thought much on that subject: I am aware, I owe him six months' service, which is more especially due because he took me for an inadequate fee; but if I could give him money instead of time, I would prefer it."

"That would not reconcile your uncle, Orlando?"

"My uncle! surely you cannot think I owe *him* obedience; a cruel, hard hearted man, who returns even our letters unread."

"We are called upon to perform our duties, whether he performs his or not: six months is not a long time to serve a kind master: when we came here, how thankfully would I have entered into any bondage, for any period of time, to have insured even your existence, my love. Think how much we owe to Heaven for extraordinary mercies, and you will think little of all that we can pay to man, in the path of duty and obedience."

"I will go with you, Seraphina, whenever you please: I will be an ironmonger all my life, if I can insure *you* comfort. How could it be, that I ever knew even the gratification of an hour, in which you shared not?"

In a few days, Orlando had bade his

gay friends adieu. Seraphina had satisfied all demands made upon her, and bade a kind farewell to their first friends, the generous artist and the benevolent physician ; and having dropped a farewell tear on the grave of their little one, they left, with much emotion, a place, in which they had experienced sensations calculated to render it most memorable and dear to their hearts ; and again entered on a new scene of anxiety, dependence, and exertion.

CHAP. VIII.

Thy lively temper, and thy cheerful air,
Have cast a smile on sadness and despair;
Thy active hand has dealt to this dull place,
The bliss of plenty and the charm of grace.

CRABBE.

ORLANDO arrived in London at a time when his services were particularly welcome; and his offer was instantly accepted with avidity by Mr. Hanbury, who told him that he had had several letters from Italy, for him, within a few days, which he had intended to bring him, as he was ordered to Bath for his health, which had been greatly injured by his stay in Ireland.

These letters were from Florence, whence it appeared, that owing to their

various movements, the family there had not received their letters with any degree of regularity; and had at one time been thrown into great distress, from learning that Seraphina had left Sir Strahan Churchill's house clandestinely. This letter having been long on its passage, was very quickly succeeded by one from Lady Emily, who had received a confession from her dying brother-in-law, which left her only anxious to discover the fugitive, that she might re-assure her by her kindness, and restore her with honour to her situation. The marriage of their respective children appeared to have given pleasure to both the fathers, but the heart of the mother was evidently full of tender alarms; and with her usual foresight, she inclosed an order for Seraphina to receive the rents from Green-how farm; and concluded by assuring her, "that so fully was she aware of the distress which was sure to arise from her early, and, therefore, imprudent marriage, that she

should hasten back to England as soon as they were able;" adding, "that they had hitherto been most happy in obtaining the objects they had in view, and that Mr. Weston's health was fully re-established, and he was now really engaged in the pursuit which she had ideally drawn out for him."

These letters were objects of delightful contemplation to all our little family, who soon became settled in lodgings near to Orlando's place of service. It was Seraphina's first care to make a settlement with the kind-hearted friend, who had assisted her down to Bath, with little expectation that the wretched invalid he sent there would ever again be able to thank him for his kindness; and from this person, she now procured such employment as would enable her to support herself during the period of her husband's remaining servitude.

The first time which Seraphina waited upon Mr. C. for the purpose of receiving

money, she had occasion to wait for him a little while, during which, her eye was attracted by a case of miniatures, which lay open upon the table. They consisted of four portraits, two of which were of children, one of a lady about twenty, and another of a lady above thirty, evidently painted much earlier; and on looking at the latter closely, she observed with surprise, that it was exactly the same with one of her father's mother, which he always carried about his person; it also struck her that one of the children resembled her own little one.

She mentioned these circumstances to Mr. C., and enquired, "if he knew the owner of the case?" to which he answered in the negative, saying, "that they had been left to his care by a stranger who had purchased many pictures of him, and requested him to get some little repairs to the miniatures in question, and

would call again for the case, on his return from the north."

Seraphina could not help musing on the circumstance all the way home; but on arriving there, it was entirely put out of her mind by the state of anxiety and uneasiness of Mrs. Weston, who, during her absence, had received the following letter: —

"Dear Niece,

"Old Johnson, my housekeeper, is dead, and I am very poorly. Sally behaves very ill, and Jack is good for nothing; so that if you are not afraid of another journey, I wish you would come and see what is to be done. But if you have the rheumatism, or any other ailment, 'tis of no use to come; but if you know of a respectable, steady person, who understands the country, you may send her. I am glad your son is returned to his business, 'tis a long lane that has never a turn, and he may happen

to do well at last; though a man seldom gets over a foolish marriage.

"Yours, &c.

"H. Weston.

When Seraphina laid down the letter, Mrs. Weston, in a low and plaintive voice, began to speak.

"I really do not know what to do, I dread going to my uncle, so much. I think it will shatter my nerves to pieces, and destroy all the health which I got up so purely at Bath; yet I am really sorry for the old man, after all; for I am sure, that saucy jade, Sally, will use him shamefully when he is sick; and he will not have the power to turn her away, now he is in this helpless state. I tremble at the thoughts of encountering her, but yet it is surely my duty. He was kind to me in my childhood; and he is become now a very old man: we must forget and forgive:—'twould be wicked to desert him."

" *I* will go to him, dear mother," said Seraphina; — " go as his servant; by that means, I shall avoid stirring all angry passions against me as an individual, and ensure to him all those kind attentions which his situation certainly requires."

When Orlando heard that Seraphina was bent on this journey, and saw that his mother was very anxious for it, although he was extremely averse from his wife encountering either fatigue or insult, yet he suffered himself to be persuaded into allowing her to adopt it; and he the rather consented, because he thought her health would be benefited by it. Circumstances compelled him to bid her a hasty farewell; and when he was gone, she dressed herself in a cap of Mrs. Weston's, and such other clothing as was calculated to make her look as much older as possible; and then with an anxious, and indeed fearful heart, set out upon an errand, which it required her utmost resolution to encounter.

But even in the short portion of time allowed to her for preparation, Seraphina had provided a little present to leave at the house where her Orlando had been treated with such cordiality by Miss Nancy and her good old aunt; nor did she pass through Stamford without a remembrance to her little frill seller. Happy was it for her, that she was thus employed, for her spirits "felt at each remove a lengthening chain," and before she reached the end of her journey, she felt surprised that she had ever possessed the temerity to encounter it.

When she arrived at M——, she was informed by an idle looking foot-boy, who swung the door backwards and forwards all the while he was speaking, "that Mr. Weston was very bad, and couldn't see nobody, so't was no use for to come in."

Seraphina stepped into the house, ordering the porter, who carried her luggage, to set it down.

"What's all this about?" said the

servant-maid, who was descending the stairs: "I suppose somebody's come here by mistake: we can't do with no company at our house, I be sure."

"I am sent here by Mrs. Weston," said Seraphina, "and——"

"Oh you be! then you may trot back again for your pains: the poor old soul up stairs shan't be disturbed on his death-bed by never a fine Lunun body, be she who she may, while my name's Sally, I warrant it."

Seraphina perceived that her task was indeed begun, for a moment she considered what was best to be done, and then enquired of the boy, what physician attended his master.

"Why, Doctor Edwards, to be sure, as lives down street."

"You may put down my boxes," said Seraphina to the porter, "and show me the way to Mr. Edwards's."

In a very short time, Seraphina returned, accompanied by this gentleman,

whom she went up stairs with, and to her surprise, found in the invalid a well-looking though aged man, sitting by a little miserable fire in his bed-room, with a basin of greasy water, dignified by the name of broth, standing by the fire-place, which he very naturally declared, "he was quite unable to eat."

When he had read Mrs. Weston's letter of introduction, he said, "it was very strange she should send such a young woman to nurse him; but, however, seeing she was come so far, she must be taken care of; but, he doubted, Sally would lead the poor thing a bad life."

"But you must not permit that," said Mr. Edwards.

"Its fine talking: what can I do, now?"

"Sir," said Seraphina, mildly, but with a firm voice, "I am come here to be your servant, and I earnestly entreat you to give me, at least, a month's trial; but I also expect to be solely mistress of

those below me; and, if *you* will place me in this situation, I have no doubt of preserving it."

"Fairly spoken, young woman, I must say, so ring the bell."

But before he had time to desire Sally's presence, she was before him, declaring most vehemently, "that she expected, now poor Johnson was dead and gone, that nobody else should be put over her head; and if that fine flaunting Lunun woman was to stay, she would leave the house in ten minutes, that she would."

"You hear, Edwards, how she goes on: this is the tune I hear ten times a day."

"Then hear it no longer, Sir," said Seraphina: "stranger as I am, I will do every thing for you, until a person can be procured in this woman's place."

The rage of the servant knew no bounds, and the noise she made so affected the patient, that the apothecary removed her down stairs by force. When

her fury had spent itself, the stranger who had announced herself as Mrs. Sarah, informed her, that if she chose to behave herself properly, she should be retained in Mr. Weston's service, under her controul; but if not, she would pay her her wages, and after making every allowance for the suddenness of her removal, dismiss her that very hour.

The calmness of Seraphina's temper, and the superiority of her manner, convinced the woman that she was not to be frightened out of her purpose; and when she saw her take an apron out of her pocket, tie it on, and then carry the coal hob up stairs to refresh her master's fire, she became convinced, that it was better to yield; so she sat down sullenly, and said, "Madam might take her own way:" the boy, who was her slave, said, "so she might for him."

Seraphina soon perceived, that the poor old man was indeed in want of every comfort, and opening a little box

which she had brought with her, she took thence some arrow-root, which she soon prepared as a substitute for his unpalatable broth. He ate it with great pleasure, saying, "It was a long time since he had had any thing half so good, and he believed that he had no complaint which good nursing could not cure." As he evidently still suffered from the late flutter, Seraphina advised him to lie down and endeavour to compose himself, observing, "she wished there had been a sofa in the room."

"There is one in the drawing-room adjoining; but Johnson never would let me use it, for fear I should spoil it: she thought it would be her's some time, poor woman, I fancy."

Seraphina immediately desired the boy to help her in bringing the sofa into her master's room, and in spite of his allegiance to Sally, he could not resist her entreaties. When Mr. Weston was laid down, Seraphina examined his bed, and

finding that it was hard, and in every respect the worst in the house, she, with Jack's assistance, exchanged it for the best, and rendered every thing in the room as comfortable as she could, without finding any fault, so that when the boy went down stairs, he declared, "she could put her hand to any thing, and was a pretty spoken body into th' bargain."

The damsel below being still invulnerable, Seraphina prepared dinner, which she partook with her charge, who greatly praised her cookery; and it also appeared afterwards, that the appetite of Sally had so far conquered her sullenness, that she had condescended to eat, and had even declared, "that if she didn't hate to be made a fool of, she might may be stay."

The next morning Mr. Weston declared, "he had had a most excellent night;" and he took the basin of chocolate which his housekeeper made him

with great pleasure, observing, "that it was very pretty of his niece to send these things for him, and showed that she was much more thoughtful than she used to be;" and he went on to enquire about her son, and "what he had been doing all this time with his young wife?"

"They have suffered a great deal both from sickness and poverty, since their marriage."

"They could expect no better: sorrow brings sickness, and poverty brings sorrow. Have they any children?"

"They had one," said Seraphina with difficulty, "but lost it."

"Poor little thing," said the old man, and her heart again softened towards him.

When Sally resumed her activity, she did not, therefore, resume her duties, but was perpetually busied in her own room, so that the most menial offices were left to the "Lunun woman," as she designated Seraphina; who, being truly happy

to see the improvement in her patient, and the progress she made in his affections, avoided every altercation which could annoy him; not doubting, but when he was able to leave his room, he would rid her and himself of such an untoward inhabitant. In the mean time, she was perpetually harassed by all possible impediments; and, as she suffered exceedingly in her own health, nothing less than extraordinary fortitude, and a firm belief that she should effect some great good to her patient, and her family, could have sustained her.

The letters of Orlando were, indeed, her sweetest cordials, and even his regret for her absence enabled her to endure separation, by proving him worthy of her utmost efforts. When she had been about two months, she received also a very great support in the presence of Mr. Weston's partner, who usually called upon him every morning, when he was at home; but he had been making his

annual journey, at the time of her arrival.

One morning, as he was at breakfast, this person (Mr. Matthews) came in, and having shut the door with a cautious air, he walked up to Mr. Weston, saying, "Pray, my good Sir, do you recollect getting from me, a bank post bill for fifty pounds, to put into a letter for your niece, Mrs. Weston?"

"To be sure, I do, though she never thought proper to acknowledge it to this day; but she was always dreadfully idle."

"Don't blame her, Sir, for depend upon it, she never received it; this is the very bill; I know it, because I wrote upon it, and a small bill at the same time, the name of John Jasper, from whom I received them; and this bill is just now put into my hands to be changed, by the nephew of your late housekeeper, who unquestionably purloined it."

"Impossible! I remember coming in, and seeing the letter was still on the

chimney piece, I sent it off by the boy, for I knew my niece was in great distress, and though I was angry, yet I could not leave her to starve."

"*I* can explain it all," said Seraphina; "Mrs. Weston received from you, at that time, a five-guinea Macclesfield bank note, which was very dirty, and on which I remember seeing the words, John Jasper, written in a good hand."

"That note I gave to Johnson, undoubtedly, for housekeeping expenses, at the very same time."

"I know you did," said Mr. Matthews, "for I was present, and remember your saying, you hated the sight of dirty paper."

"Mrs. Weston was so struck with the circumstance of the note being dirty, that she said when she received it, that she was sure you had not sent it, especially as it was so trifling a sum, for the purpose of which you spoke; and she specified expressly, in acknowledging it, the sum that you sent."

" I never had any answer from her, from that day to this; nor should I ever have written to her again, but for the abominable sauciness of the girl down stairs."

" Of course," said Mr. Matthews, " all other letters have been kept from you for fear of discovery: the case is plain."

" They were returned by the post, as I can prove to you."

Seraphina opened her work-bag, and produced one so returned, which she had herself written in a time of great distress. The old man held it in his hand, evidently bewildered, and greatly hurt; repeatedly saying " Poor Betsey! what must she think of me — five guineas! — it was mocking her: you know, Matthews, if you had brought me *more*, I should have put it in. — I was angry at her son, but I did not mean to be so severe on Betsey, — my old friend's child."

The old man's tears began to course slowly down his cheek, and he repeatedly cried, " Poor Betsey! — there was no harm in her; and to have a fever in a

strange place, and her husband over seas, and her poor boy leaving his place to wait upon her, — oh ! it was too bad : — she can never get over it."

" Yes, Sir ; and then to have her own letters returned to her," said Mr. Matthews ; " and to know, as she must, that your servants were picking your pocket, whilst your own flesh and blood was starving ; — but she's not a woman to bear malice."

" Ah, no!" exclaimed Seraphina ; " had you seen, Sir, how truly anxious she was for your welfare, with what affectionate remembrance she spoke of your kindness to her in childhood, and how determined she was to come to your assistance, until she was persuaded that I could nurse you better ; you would know how sincerely she had forgiven you."

The old man, deeply affected, struggled to hide his feelings, by opening the letter, and compelling himself to read it, though his spectacles were often wiped to enable

him to see it; at length he said, "why, this is not written by Betsey, it seems; but it's a pretty letter, very pretty, I must say that," handing it, as he spoke, to Mr. Matthews.

"It's a letter," said Mr. Matthews, "that's enough to break one's heart. I'm sure if either me, or my wife, had known your relations had been in this situation, the best bed and the best bit in our house should have been theirs;—poor young creatures! what could they do in such a state as this?"

Seraphina, overcome by her recollections, sobbed aloud. "I suppose," said Mr. Matthews, "*you* know all this to be true," addressing her.

"Oh, yes!" said the old man, "she knows 'em all, and loves 'em all, and she's a tender heart, that would help any body, nor shall she ever want the means, that I promise her, for she's been a child, and more than a child to me."

"Then, Sir," said Seraphina, seizing

his hand and kissing it, " I hope you will forgive me, for the only fault you have ever laid to my charge."

" Fault! fault! — you have no faults, child."

" I am the wife of Orlando Weston; — the unhappy young woman who wrote the very letter in your hand."

The aged seldom weep, but the old man wept freely, as he threw his trembling arms round Seraphina, and called her " his darling daughter, the preserver of his life," taking Mr. Matthews to witness, " that her and her husband should be the heirs of all his property, and the dispensers of good to their beloved parents." Fearful that such a scene should be injurious to his health, Seraphina, while her heart most devoutly ascended to Heaven in thankful joy, yet so moderated her expression of it to him, as to soothe and tranquillise his spirits. Having prevailed upon him to lie down and endeavour to compose him-

self, she compelled herself to attend to Mr. Matthews, whose sensibility was now yielding to his indignation, against the servants who had practised on a temper naturally but too unyielding, to irritate him against his relatives, and plunder him themselves.

Seraphina had no doubt but, that the real intention of Sally in remaining in the house, had been either to conceal some past transaction, or expedite some farther theft; and recalled to mind the trouble she had repeatedly had in procuring necessary linen for Mr. Weston, or even a spoon for his use. On making these observations Mr. Matthews determined what mode to pursue; and desiring her upon no account to leave the room, or allow herself to be disturbed, he immediately went out of the house, without showing any change in his manners, although he was really in much agitation.

In a short time he returned with a

search warrant, and the boxes of Sally soon displayed the use which she had made of her time since Seraphina's arrival, as they were stored with the property of her master, and even a few articles belonging to the new inmate were found there; her own clothes being all removed, as if to make room for her depredations. These circumstances undoubtedly expedited her flight, as the moment she learnt from the boy, that Mr. Matthews and a stranger were up-stairs, she ran out of the house and secured a retreat.

When this virago was removed, it was by no means difficult to procure respectable servants, to whom Seraphina was introduced in her proper character; as indeed Mr. Weston appeared to think he could never do her sufficient honour; and as he now found that her late indisposition proceeded from a cause which was likely to perpetuate the family name; he became, with all that solicitude which

attaches to old age, as anxious to benefit his late deserted posterity, and place them properly before the world as possible; and he even began to talk of removing to Weston Green, and re-establishing the family there.

As Mr. Matthews had long wished to inhabit Mr. Weston's house, which was particularly suitable both for his business and his family, he forwarded this scheme; and as Seraphina had naturally a great desire to see the place where her beloved husband was born, and which he was wont to depict as an earthly paradise, of course she made no objection; and as Gibson, who lived in a portion of the building, which was separated from the house, was desired to air it immediately, in about a fortnight they departed thither.

It was now the latter end of April, the weather was warm and pleasant, and their journey of fifteen miles was passed in all that variety of country which is peculiar

to the borders of Derbyshire: — part of it lay over wild moorlands, sublime from their continuity, and frequently picturesque in the foreground from rocky knolls and pebbled brooks. They passed also through rich meadows and verdant fields, skirted bold mountains, crowned by beetling rocks; and passed in their way the silver Dove and the flowing Derwent. Seraphina had never seen any scenery to compare with this in England, and her admiration was delightful to the old man; it not only gratified his own predilection for his native country, but it soothed those feelings of self-condemnation with which he reviewed his past conduct, and pointed out the way in which to recompense them all for past sufferings.

The sun cast its departing rays on Weston Green as they arrived there, and the general beauty of the scene prevented Seraphina from witnessing the look of decay and melancholy, which pervaded

the appearance of the house and garden; but when she saw them in the morning, her heart sunk at the forlorn appearance of every thing around her; the windows were darkened with the profusion of unpruned flowers; the papers were dropping from the walls; the garden itself had been turned into potatoe-ground, and the drawing-room rendered a receptacle for all the stores of a farmer.

As Gibson had however done his best to render one room fit for their reception; as himself, his wife and sons, were all delighted with the idea of having the house inhabited, and all their rustic neighbours came round with offers of service, and the master's purse was opened to her with a liberality no human being had ever expected to behold; all difficulties speedily vanished. The energy and the taste of Seraphina were never more happily employed, and as she found that every essential improvement had been made by the last

inhabitant, repairs and cleanliness were alone wanting to render the place, all that Orlando had depicted it; and the season of the year was favourable to all external improvements. The pure air of his native hills, the pleasure of watching others obey the wishes of Seraphina, and the delight he felt in retracing with her the rambles of his childhood, gave a new being to the old man, who had now lost every trace of his late complaint, and appeared in his own phrase, " to have taken a new lease of his existence."

But it was his particular request that all their proceedings might be kept a profound secret from Orlando and his mother; until that period when the former had fulfilled his engagement, when he declared his intention of sending for them together and surprising them; and in order to keep up the deception, he took the trouble of sending for all letters

from the town he had left, and causing Seraphina's to be put into the same post. Under these precautions, it was with much surprise that they both learnt on returning from a walk that a gentleman had been waiting some time in great anxiety to see young Mrs. Weston.

The heart of Seraphina beat quickly, she had no doubt but it was Orlando, and while she longed to behold him, she yet dreaded that his premature appearance might be somewhat injurious to the good-will which his aged relative now bore towards him.

But a very different person to that of her young and now blooming partner met her eye — an aged man of a deeply bilious complexion, who, notwithstanding the warmth of the season, had wrapt himself in a shabby great coat evidently made for a larger person, was awaiting her. He did not take off his hat till

she had got close up to him, and then engaged in scrutinizing her person with a glass, he appeared too much abstracted to attend properly to her address.

Whatever might be passing in his mind, it was evident that he was affected by it to an uncommon degree, and Seraphina had too much genuine sensibility not to wait with patience the developement of his thoughts; at length he said in a voice which seemed familiar and pleasing to her ear, "I beg you to excuse me, ma'am, I am so deeply interested in this interview, that I can scarcely muster courage for the question I am about to ask."

"Pray sit down, Sir, and compose yourself; allow me to offer you refreshment."

"Not yet, not yet; I have been directed to you by Mr. C—— who told me that, on seeing a case of miniatures in his house, you declared that one of

them was the counterpart of one which your father always wore about his person, and spoke of that father as being abroad, but you did not mention his name."

"It is Henry Barnard, Sir, the picture is that of Mrs. Spottiswolde, my grandmother; is it possible that you are my dear father's brother who went to India so many, many years ago? It must be so! your voice and your eyes are like his, they are like my own. I thought too the children in the miniature resembled my own poor baby."

Tears sprung to Seraphina's eyes, which were met with answering drops by those of the stranger, who said, "he was indeed that long lost brother, whose endeavours to find any of his family by letter, had always failed from the time when, upon the death of his mother, Mr. Spottiswolde had gone to Italy. It appeared that he had not married till late in life, when the suc-

cessive deaths of his wife and two young children had induced him to quit a country to which, from long residence he had become attached, and that on his arrival in England, he had rather wished than hoped, to find remains of a family so long divided.

" My first care," said Mr. Barnard, " after having settled my affairs in London, where I merely found that my brother's name was known as an artist residing in Italy, was to go down into Scotland, and enquire for my sister, who, I found died, like our dear mother, in childbirth, leaving one little girl; this child I have been tracing rather in her descendants than in her own person; for she married to America, and her only son was sent over to his grandfather; but alas! I learnt he had fallen in the Peninsula, a young and promising officer. • •

" On returning to London, and calling for that case of miniatures, which

was now doubly valuable, a parcel was laid on the counter directed to you, which, I believe, led the master of the shop to mention the circumstance of your noticing my pictures, and such was my impatience to satisfy myself whether you were indeed a descendant of Henry, to whom as a child seven years younger than myself, I was exceedingly attached, that I lost not an hour in setting out, although the person offered to give me an address to your mother-in-law. I believe, indeed, so much has the desire of finding relations increased upon me, since my return to my native country, that if I had not been thus providentially led to you, I should have commenced a journey to Italy to seek your father."

"Providential, indeed!" cried Seraphina, recollecting that Mr. C—— was the only person who actually knew that she was at Weston Green; "but," she added, "it is very probable that my dear father would have been returning by the time

that you had arrived, for my mother is impatient to see me."

"Has my brother no other child?"

"Alas! no; like you, he has been so unhappy as to lose three lovely boys."

"Excuse me, if, stranger as I am, I may so far presume upon another enquiry; how is your father situated in life?"

"My father has suffered from the circumstances of the times, and when he came to England, lost almost all his property, but his talents are of the first order, and —"

The stranger heaved so profound a sigh at this moment, that Seraphina started; it struck her for the first time that his appearance, which was externally shabby, owing to his borrowed wrapping coat, indicated distress; and the idea that he was returned, bereft, not only of family, but fortune, affected her exceedingly, and without reasoning on the circumstance, she instantly ap-

proached him with that air of tenderness which true sympathy alone can dictate, and seizing his hand, said, " My dear uncle, my father is not *poor*, oh! no, and he has a heart so kind, so noble; it is a princely heart, and will be delighted to own the *claims* of a brother; and then my mother, how you will love my mother! she will be to you, sister, friend, every thing!"

The stranger imprinted on Seraphina's hand repeated kisses; but his heart was too full for reply, and she continued; —

" Perhaps, Mr. C—— might tell you that I had been in great distress, since I was married, and that I was indebted to his assistance for relief; but that is all over *now*, and though we are, indeed, in complete dependence, yet I have every comfort of life about me, and I am sure, Mr. Weston, the master of this house, will be quite happy to see you, and —"

" Dear, generous, girl; child of my

heart, I see all you would say," said the stranger, "and it is too, too much; it repays all my wanderings, restores me my little ones."

The stranger threw himself into a chair and wept freely, and before he could recover, Gibson entered to say, "that the gentleman's servant were comed from the public-house, to know whether he would want the horses to return with that night."

"Oh, no," said Seraphina, "this gentleman is my uncle, Gibson, and will remain here some time, I hope."

"Then he mun just gi' me that big cooat, becase he got it fra the pooast boy, being starved, I suppose, wi comin fra forrin parts, into these coald hinder ends, one may say."

Mr. Barnard took off the coat, and Seraphina, on handing it to Gibson, said, "you must procure me another immediately."

"I wull, I wull; but Maister Weston's a

coming to see the gentleman, I shall tell un, he be your uncle."

"And, perhaps," said Mr. Barnard, "my dear niece, it may be as well for this relation of your husband's, to know that this uncle is returned a *rich* man, and declares you his heiress; for never, *never*, will he forget, that your kindest words of welcome were directed to him as one *poor*; that old coat, I ought to have preserved it."

Mr. Weston, entered; he was already sufficiently informed on this head, for he had learnt that the stranger, travelled in his own carriage, and he was certainly glad to find his great niece had got a rich uncle, although he would hardly have exchanged his share in her affectionate attentions, for any wealth he was likely to bring into the family. So cordial, however, was his welcome, and so delightful was it to the stranger, to be recognized as a near relative by one, whom he could love so cordially as Se-

raphina, that he accepted his invitation with the greatest pleasure, and consented to become, for some time, an inmate at Weston Green.

Mr. Barnard, like the generality of long residents in the East, was in delicate health, and looked much older than he really was, and Mr. Weston, who was nearly twenty years his senior, had great pride and pleasure, in bustling about and exhibiting his own superior strength and powers of endurance; and Seraphina was frequently obliged to exert her benign influence, in preventing him from exertions to which he was unequal; so kind was her guardianship of both her declining relatives, and so judicious her cares, that they alike flourished beneath her protection; but as Mr. Barnard had been informed of all their plans, and aided them in preparing for the new inhabitants, as soon as he perceived that the house was ready, he pressed the old man exceedingly to send for Orlando, being

himself impatient to see the man who had been selected by a niece so justly dear to him, and also aware, that in her situation, the mother-in-law, of whom she spoke with so much affection, could not fail to be most valuable to her.

At length the day arrived, and Seraphina summoned them to Weston Green, intreating them to make the least possible delay, and informing them of the addition which she had gained to her happiness in the presence of her uncle, Mr. Barnard. From the time this letter was dispatched, although it was hardly likely that they could arrive in less than a week, as even now some trifling time was due to Mr. Hanbury, and Mrs. Weston must have certain arrangements to make, yet the old man knew not a moment's peace, or suffered those around him to know it. Poultry was killed, pies and custards were made, for the expected guests, and with the anxiety of a child to exhibit a new toy, every thing in his furniture and

farming utensils, were placed in such a manner as to attract their attention, and ensure their admiration the moment of their arrival.

As it was barely possible, though utterly improbable, that they should arrive on the third evening, he insisted on Mr. Barnard's accompanying him in a walk to look out for them, and as it was very warm, the latter made no objection. Mr. Weston led the way, and climbed up a steep, stony hill, which, like many in Derbyshire, was incrustated with a kind of slate shingles, which renders them extremely difficult to mount, saying, "that from thence they could see a carriage for many miles." Poor Mr. Barnard could by no means follow his aged, but intrepid guide; and his laborious and unsuccessful endeavours, awoke the loud mirth of the hale mountaineer, who promised to return and help him up. At the very moment he turned round, his feet slipped, and he fell the whole length of the way

he had traversed, having no power to stay himself, and being beyond the reach of his companion.

Mr. Barnard dreadfully shocked, hastened to his assistance, fearing to find him dead upon the spot. He found him dreadfully hurt, but not insensible; and having raised his head, he set out for assistance, which was speedily obtained, and a surgeon was procured, even before the servants had reached home. Mr. Barnard informed Seraphina of this sad accident, in the most prudent manner, and she soon recovered sufficiently from the shock, to be able to pay him every possible assistance. But the fiat was soon past, for a fall which might have been fatal, even in early life, was not likely to be got over at eighty.

A fever, the consequence of his bruises, ensued, but it left him in possession of his senses; and the same intense desire to see Orlando, and to ask forgiveness of his niece, still actuated his mind;

man, if he chose, might ask his mistress whether the boy had drank any of the beer or not."

The matter was quickly explained, and the supposed culprit not only acquitted, but praised; and told that if he came about the place next day, some job would be given to him; and it was observed by all, "that really he was a likely lad, and appeared willing to work." But beyond the intention of giving him a job on the morrow, no person thought, save poor Betty; and when she ventured to say, "that perhaps the farmer, if he were at home, might take him into his service during the busy time at least," many tongues exclaimed violently, as being the most imprudent thing ever heard of; and some one added, "what no one would have thought but herself: "people who paid taxes and poor rates," Mrs. Forrester observed, "could not afford such charitable actions, if they meant to pay their way and live honestly;

pretty well if they could bring up their own seven children."

"Very true," observed Betty, with a sigh, "I did not think of your large family."

"Why no, Betty, for sartin you did not, I know you to be an honest, civil, body; but, dear heart, your head runs so much on preaching and praying, that you thinks on nothing else, as it were; but howsomdever, every body has a right to please themselves. I hates hypocrisy and canting, to be sure, and think it a pity an honest body should take to such ways; but if you chuses to be a saint, why, that's no concern of mine."

Betty would unquestionably have answered this oration, but as every one around had either an approving word for the speaker, as a sneer far more cutting than any words for the defendant, she silently whispered to herself, "to this cross I must submit;" and wishing them a good night, she made the best of her

way home, still followed by the boy who carried her sickle, and appeared to fall into the place of her attendant, without either invitation on the one part, or intrusion on the other.

Betty walked homewards silently; for some time she pondered on what had been said to her, but it was less in reference to what she would have termed her own persecution, than to that part of it which belonged to the boy. She was a woman of great humanity, extraordinary activity and industry, possessing much spirit and good sense, together with considerable patience and perseverance; the former qualities she inherited from nature, the latter were ingrafted by religion; and although her views were very bounded, and her knowledge had been principally bestowed by very humble teachers, yet a further acquaintance with her will enable us to see that it rendered her connections essential benefit, and made her "wise unto salvation."

After a time, Betty began to speak to her humble companion, and enquire his circumstances; she felt a reliance upon his veracity, which was satisfactory to her, but she had observed a particular solicitude to hide as much of his history as he could, which was painful to her. When, however, the beggar found himself alone with one whose good-will he could not doubt, and of whose power to keep silence he had received proof, the natural ingenuousness of his nature, which suffering alone had checked, became soon restored; and the following conversation revealed that "round unvarnished story," which Elizabeth sought for.

and Mr. Barnard wrote, urging them not to lose a single hour. Happily they had set out before the letter arrived in London, and on the third night after the accident happened, they arrived at that "pleasant home," which was at this time a house of mourning.

The whole of that day, life had hung on a feeble thread, and the wandering eyes of the patient rather than his words had indicated his desires; he was, however, evidently sensible, and his hearing seemed to be quicker than usual. When therefore the strangers actually arrived, which was late, Seraphina scarcely allowed herself to give the kiss of welcome, ere she ushered them into the sick man's room.

Causing himself to be raised in bed, the old man addressed entreaties of forgiveness to Mrs. Weston, in which she learnt, with surprise, that he referred to his first conduct to her husband, saying, "had he sent him to college, as his bro-

ther intended, all things would have gone well." He then threw out his arms to Orlando, who knelt by the bed-side to receive his embrace; and whom he gazed on with intensity, yet complained that he could not see. Orlando spoke to him, and his voice seemed to give him pleasure, and he appeared to struggle with himself for power to address him; but all his efforts ended in few but affecting words.

"Be a good husband, my dear boy, so may God bless you." Fatigued, he sunk back on his pillow, but continued to grasp Orlando's hand. He soon afterwards grasped the bed-clothes, and Seraphina, who understood all his motions, instantly put *her* hand in his; he smiled, and again endeavoured to speak, but nature was exhausted, and in the effort he expired.

CHAP. IX.

Retirement, rural quiet, friendship, books,
Ease, and alternate labour, useful life,
Progressive virtue, and approving heaven.
These are the matchless joys of virtuous love
And thus their moments pass——

THOMPSON.

It was found that although Mr. Weston had indeed fully forgiven his nephew, yet he had still retained his original ideas that he was not a man calculated for managing a fortune, for he had left all his property to Orlando, on condition of his paying five hundred a year, to his parents, for their lives, and appointed a house, upon the Weston-green estate, for their residence, if they chose to live there; and this, with a legacy to his partner, Mr. Matthews, and a remem-

brance to Gibson, constituted his will, which had been executed since the arrival of Mr. Barnard, at Weston-green, and with his privity, which alone could account for the absence of Seraphina's name.

There were no letters from Italy, which was the only circumstance which could cast a shadow on the happiness of our young couple, save that tender solicitude which the situation of Seraphina inspired. Orlando was never weary in admiring the improvements she had made in the dear place of his nativity, and Mrs. Weston surveyed all with smiles and tears; but within a month, they had both a new object of admiration, in a lovely and healthful boy.

The young stranger was greeted by Mr. Barnard, with a pleasure only inferior to their own; but after waiting to see his niece pay her first visit to the drawing room, he professed his intention of setting out for London, saying, that he would

return whenever his brother should arrive in the country, but he was conscious of intruding too much upon them in the present state of the family.

As Seraphina thought it was possible that he wished for more retirement, and was yet aware that he did not like to remove far from her, and she had become much attached to him, she proposed that he should inhabit the house specified for Mr. and Mrs. Weston, to which he joyfully agreed; and Orlando, with avidity, declared, he could have no pleasure greater than that of preparing it for his reception.

"I am glad you have settled it," said Mrs. Weston, "for I should have considered it quite cruel for Mr. Barnard to have gone away before the child was christened, seeing that both the grandfathers are at such a dreadful distance."

But on the very eve of that important day, when poor Mrs. Weston was exert-

ing herself, in a manner the walls of that house had never witnessed before, she was called from her employment by Orlando, who saw a post-chaise coming towards the house, and judging it to be Mr. Matthews, entreated her to come and welcome him, as he was unknown both to Mr. Barnard and himself.

Mr. Matthews was indeed one of the party; but there were two other gentlemen; and last of all, a lady got out of the loaded vehicle.

Could it be? O yes, it was indeed her husband, her own dear Weston, come to his own house; but so brown, and ruddy, looking so strange, and yet so well.

But before she had time to speak, before Orlando, (altered beyond any other person) had time to welcome either father—Seraphina rushing down stairs, was in the midst of them, and her arms around her mother's neck.

"We have done wrong, indeed we have, to come upon her so suddenly," said Mrs. Barnard, in apprehension, which almost subdued her joy.

"Oh no, no, said Seraphina, weeping, I am well, quite well—my dear father, I have such a present for you, an invaluable present."

"And is it not for me, too," said Mr. Weston, with his usual tender tones.

"Dear Mr. Weston, my *father*, excuse me; but see, I have got another father."

The elder Barnard, sympathizing in all he saw, stood apart with Mr. Matthews; and Seraphina, now seizing his hand, led him forwards, saying, "my dear father, here is a treasure for you, your long lost brother."

"Yes, Henry, your child; *my* child, let me call her, tells you the truth, we are sons of the same beloved mother, of the same father too, but of him you can have no remembrance."

Mr. Barnard cast up his eyes to heaven, ere he fell on the neck of that brother, whom he strained to his bosom, as a gift so new, so unexpected, that for a moment it went beyond the rest—but who shall tell the joy of a meeting so full of happiness, after such a tide of sorrow? Or who will doubt, that the least and last of the family, when introduced, had its full share of praise, affection, and admiration?

When the party were a little more composed, Mr. Weston observed, "that his lady was much thinner, but looking remarkably well; and that she tripped about the house like a young girl."

"She *is* remarkably well," said Orlando, "'tis not an hour since she challenged my uncle Barnard to dance with her to-morrow."

"Say no more on that subject, Orlando," said Mrs. Weston, "for we will not advert to the school where my new

steps were gained, (and which are yet very deficient, when compared with those of your wife, and her excellent mother;) severe, but salutary, were my lessons, but I wish only to remember them to quicken the gratitude, and exalt the delight, of a meeting so full of happiness as this."

"Thank you, dear mother, you have been very kind, and told us a long story," said Mary, "and now we shall look to my aunt."

"But as your aunt has it not in her power to *tell* you a story," said Miss Selwyn, "she will beg the favour of George to *read* one for her."

As Miss Selwyn spoke, she laid a MS. before her nephew, to the great surprise of Letitia, who could not conceive, when her good relative could have found time to write so much.

"I fear you will think I have written

too much, Letitia," said Miss Selwyn, "for my tale will be found deficient in some of your principal requisitions; I fear there will be neither love enough, nor money enough for your taste, but I can assure you, that there will be literal facts, (which is always the first subject of enquiry to young people,) and perhaps I may venture to add novelty, for my story is written upon beggars."

"'The Beggar Girl and her Benefactors,' is a very good novel," said Mrs. Denbigh.

"Benefactors, is an extensive word, it embraces every rank of society," observed Mr. Selwyn.

"True, brother, but my observations, like my path in life, have been very circumscribed, and I can only offer you the incidents I have witnessed, the people I have known, and the benevolence I have estimated. I relate in this story, that which my memory registers as the

most exalted acts of humanity I have happened to know practised, and at the same time discharge a debt to my conscience; for I promised myself, many years ago, to give the conduct of my heroine, all the publicity in my power, not for the purpose of bestowing fame, but of encouraging others to follow her example, by witnessing its beneficial effects — but I must not spoil my tale by forestalling its contents, I only mean to bespeak your suffrages, for both the subject, and the author."

"Dear Letitia," said Mr. Selwyn, "do not trouble yourself with apology; next year, we will demand from these young ones, the entertainment they now require from us, and until they have proved themselves the more accomplished story-tellers, we will not tamely submit to their criticisms; before that time, in all probability, great changes will have taken place, but I believe not of the na-

ture which imposes silence upon your sex in general."

"Pray, George, begin the story," said Mary and Rose in the same moment; and George obeyed.

ELIZABETH AND HER BOYS;

OR,

THE BEGGAR'S STORY.

CHAP. I.

Each had immediate confidence; a friend
Both now beheld on whom they might depend.
" Now is there one to whom I can express
" My nature's weakness, and my soul's distress."

CRABBE.

THE sun was sinking, but his rays still imparted considerable heat, and a large party of reapers in the corn-fields of Farmer Forrester, were earnestly wishing for something to assuage their thirst, " once more," when one of them observed, that, " there was an idle young dog standing near the gate, who might easily run down to the house

and ask the mistress to send them another pitcher of beer."

"Halloa, my lad, what art tho' doing there? what dast tho' want?" cried the the farmer's man.

"I want nothing," answered the lad, at the same time coming forward with a celerity that seemed to add, "but I am willing to do any thing."

As the boy advanced, one of the women scanned him with an observing eye. "God help thee," said she internally, "it appears to me, thou art wanting every thing."

The appearance of the child indeed justified this conclusion, for he was bare-legged and bare-footed, his clothes were indeed not very ragged, though coarse, being such as are generally provided for paupers by parish workhouses. He had no hat, and his face was not only tanned to a perfect bronze, but exhibited that shrinking of the flesh which is seldom produced in early life but by

famishing hunger. Yet although the general impression given by his appearance was that of extreme distress, there was a degree of fire in his dark eye, and an alacrity in his movements, which, together with his form (which was athletic for his age) conveyed an idea that he was strong, and "could work if he would;" and such was the comment made upon him by the present company.

The errand on which he was now dispatched he executed with rapidity; the reapers hailed his return, and crowded around him, but it was soon perceived that the pitcher of beer which he had brought, was not more than three parts full.

"The young rogue has drunk deep," said the men with one voice.

"Who can wonder at that?" replied the woman, eyeing him with looks of commiseration.

Elizabeth Allen, the person who had

first observed and pitied him, and who now felt an increase of interest in him from the promptitude of his services, and the further observation of his poverty, ventured to speak a few words in his favour, and then turning to him with a mild voice and encouraging look, she enquired, "if the beer pitcher had been given to him in that state?"

"Yes," said the boy, "Dame said she had no more."

A loud laugh from the reapers disconcerted the little stranger; he concluded it arose from his usage of the word "dame," which was by no means familiar to himself, but had struck him as suited to country people; he therefore, without manifesting any ill-humour, added, "I mean the mistress of the house said so."

"Thee liest," said the farmer's man, "for mistress said nought o'th sort; thee hast drank it, and soa thee shalt ha noa mare."

This sentence was heard with manifest disappointment, but with such an air of heart broken and habitual despondency, as went to the very heart of his good-natured advocate, who taking her last remnant of bread and cheese from the old handkerchief in which it lay wrapt under the hedge, immediately gave it to him, " saying, never mind drink, child, there is a spring in the lane hard by, will quench thy thirst."

The welcome boon was received with that look of eager joy which bespoke its value, and rather devoured than eaten by the hungry wanderer.

Elizabeth returned to her work, but her heart was full, and from time to time, her eye shot frequent glances towards the boy, who still stood under the hedge with an air of conscious intrusion, yet evident unwillingness to depart.

He had not been long, when his poor benefactress, forgetting the nature of

her employment in the strongly awakened compassion of her feelings, cut a terrible gash in her thumb with the sickle. The moment she held up her bleeding hand, the poor boy flew to her with an air of great anxiety, and would have bound up the wound, but he was rudely pushed aside by those around her. Even their better aid was however soon found insufficient, and Elizabeth, attended by several of her fellow-labourers, and followed by him they too naturally styled "the vagabond," now proceeded to the house of Farmer Forrester.

Mrs. Forrester was a notable, good-tempered woman, well calculated for the active life to which she was called; she lost no time in applying a portion of brown sugar to the part injured, and binding the hand with a stripe of old linen, whilst this operation went forward, her tongue was not less busy than her hands; and after due condolencies on the nature of the injury, she adverted to

her own interest in the affairs of the day, and after observing "how hot it had been," added, "I was sorry to send you the beer pitcher so far short of being full, but really I could not tap another barrel till my master came in to help me."

This declaration made the sufferer forget all the pain in her hand, since it establish the truth of the poor boy's declaration, together with the honesty of his conduct; and this, added to the uncomplaining submission with which he had endured the unwarranted accusation, gave him a still higher interest in her heart. A tear sprung to her eye, as turning her head she beheld him gazing through the open door of the farmer's kitchen. She rose hastily, and thanking Mrs. Forrester in few words, but warmly uttered, went out to question the boy as to his situation, and to inform him, that she was not hurt much; an assurance which she

felt to be necessary to his comfort from the anxious look he still wore.

By this time the whole party of reapers was disbanded, the farmer's man and boy were returning, accompanied by several of their companions, into the fold, and on seeing Elizabeth in close conversation with the same beggar lad, the former called out, "Hallo, Betty, what are ye about there? are ye going to convert young Scape-grace there, hey? I hoape ye'll teach him not to drink so deep another time, hey."

"Betty knows better than that," said a neighbour, "she knows that Methodists like a drop in a corner, though they never gets drunk; just i' the same way as they lies, though they never swears."

Betty turned round very quick, and the glow of anger surmounted even the heat of recent labour on her cheek; but she checked herself, and did not utter the words that rose to her tongue; but after a moment's pause, observed only, "that the

CHAP. II.

Let not ambition mock their useful toil,
Their homely joys and destiny obscure;
Nor grandeur hear, with a disdainful smile,
The short and simple annals of the poor.

GRAY.

"You say, my boy, that your father was a soldier; I fear you have lost him?" said Elizabeth.

"Oh yes! I believe he was killed in America; mother said he was, and indeed so did Sergeant Hallam."

"Where is your mother?"

"God knows; — she — she left us."

"Left *us*, — left who, child? Your mother could not leave you, unless she was forced away?"

"May be not," was the only answer, but it was followed by such a flood of bitter

tears; that however loath she might be to believe it, Elizabeth yet felt assured that, in this case, even a mother had forsaken a child. She suffered the agony thus awakened to subside, and not till then ventured to inquire, "How and where he had been left?" But, in order to save our readers from the circumlocutory story, which his sorrows naturally led him to relate, we will give it in the fewest possible words.

William Warren, our helpless, but not worthless vagabond, was indeed the son of a soldier, who had fallen in the last battle between the Americans and the mother-country, being previously rendered much of an invalid from the wounds he had received. According to his bounded power, this man was a good husband and father, but, his wife was idle, unprincipled, and too much of the general description of those young women who are found following the fortunes of war, on the top of a baggage-

waggon; careless of the future, forgetful of the past, existing but in the passing moment; whom even experience fails to render provident, and sorrow or joy passes over in vain.

William had one sister, two years younger than himself, to whom, from her very birth, he had been fondly attached; and as he had been her principal nurse and her only comfort, it was no wonder that the affection had grown with his growth, or that it was returned on her part, by all the tenderness her little heart was capable of. The more especially endeared were these children to each other, because they had little comfort from any other quarter, the father being generally too much occupied with his cares, or his ailments, to take any other notice than a demand of their services; and the mother seldom giving them any attention when she could find one person with whom she could gossip on the probable route of the regiment, the dearness of

gin, or the chance of picking up any thing in the next engagement.

With hardship of every kind William had been acquainted almost from his birth; but his various privations were frequently lessened, during several of the years he had passed with his parents in America, by the kindness and compassion of the sergeant belonging to the company in which his father was placed. His open, sun-burnt countenance as he sat with his little sister on his lap, shading her fair face with a plantain-leaf, first attracted the honest veteran; and the more he observed the lad, the more he became prepossessed in his favour. Sensible that all around him tended to corrupt and harden his heart, as well as to brutalize his manners, he determined to withdraw him as much as possible, from a society which could not fail to be injurious to him; and in order to do this he gave him employment for his mind, without withdrawing him from his sister, well aware,

that the intercourse of natural affection is ever an incentive to virtue; and from his scanty comforts he so far rewarded the exertions of his protegé, that his very wishes became commands, his smiles rewards to William, and as he was really a sensible man, and possessed a considerable stock of useful and agreeable knowledge, no wonder that his every word was an oracle to a child thus situated. In fact, the love he bore to this early patron was a kind of idolatry, in which all the faculties of his heart and affections were concentered, yet it is certain he never held his parents so dear, as after the time when he became distinguished by the good sergeant, for it was from him that he gained a sense of duty to them.

When the fate of his father was ascertained, and the widow and children were ordered to return, William felt all the misery attendant on a separation from his first, his only friend; his grateful and attached heart, could only relieve itself

by weeping with his sister, and repeating to her a thousand times all the instances of goodness and love he had received from the sergeant; and on the very morning they went on ship-board, the two children withdrew into an obscure place together, and with bended knees and folded hands, looked up to heaven for blessings on the head of him who was now far removed from them, and encompassed by dangers. Their words were few; "pray God to bless Sergeant Hallam," said William aloud, and Betsey repeated it after him, "and don't let him be killed like poor father." The little girl could not repeat this, she burst into tears, and William folding her in his arms, wept with her, yet they arose comforted. A sense that the awful Power they had invoked would not "despise the day of small things," stole over their minds, and they felt a kind of assurance that they should once more see and be comforted by the presence

of their friend, that friend, who had alone taught them to look up to Heaven for consolation and guidance.

Before the end of the voyage, different associations, the natural volatility of youth, the bad example of their only parent, and even the extreme poverty under which they laboured, had nearly extinguished every impression of religion from their minds, and even every moral lesson of the sergeant's, save as memory connected them with his own words and looks, at the time he enforced them; so that just what he said on this, or that occasion, alone held its wonted ascendency. There is a species of necessity, which quickens the faculties, but a degree beyond this frequently deadens them to every useful purpose, and when the human mind is subjected only to a sense of its wants, it becomes the least able to supply them consistent with its duties. On arriving in England, it appeared to be the great object of the mother, to

reach the town of S——, to claim parochial aid for her children. The little which was given to her, did not suffice for their conveyance thither from the part where she landed, but she nevertheless set out immediately, observing, "that they must beg their way, as many did beside them."

These words struck both the children exceedingly and they felt as if they had never known sorrow till now, for they had both a just sense of the utter degradation which begging implies, even in the lowest orders of society. Yet there can be no doubt but if they had been treated with tenderness by their mother, they [illegible] yielded all their little [illegible] to help her in this day of adversity, since they both silently resolved to help each other.

In a short time, this dangerous and wretched profession was entered upon by William, who began to beg from door to door, through a long straggling vil-

lage, while his mother and sister sat down to rest themselves at its entrance. Wherever he applied for relief, whether granted or not, he was constantly told, "he ought to work, that it was a shame that a great lad like him should beg," and in several instances, to this exordium, was added an assurance, "that if he did not get out of the village, he should be taken up for a vagrant."

Brought up as this poor boy had been, entirely in the army, and with a mother who had never manifested the industry called for in her situation, it was no wonder that he scarcely could conceive to what such an exhortation applied, he knew of no work except cleaning a firelock and shoes; and he well remembered that his father had ever appeared to act as if this were disagreeable. Long marches, hard fare, the cold ground for his bed, and harsh words, or perhaps blows in the very moment when his wearied frame, or his aching heart most need-

ed consolation, had been common trials to poor William; but he had yet to learn the power of applying to regular labour of any kind; and although the efforts of his friend the sergeant, had all tended to give him strength and activity both of body and mind, yet he had it not in his power to direct him to any regular exertion of them. When the poor boy returned to his mother, with the alms he had obtained, he fully intended to entreat her to put him in some way of working, agreeably to the advice thus bestowed; but all ideas of himself were put to flight, on finding Betsey so ill, that even her long fast would not enable her to partake the refreshment he had procured.

Before their arrival at the town of S——, whither they bent their steps, it was discovered that the poor child had got the measles, and as William was ever near her, and many times even carried her on his back, till his knees smote un-

der him; it was no wonder that a disorder so infectious seized him also, and at the village nearest to the end of their journey both children were found utterly unable to proceed. A few halfpence, bestowed on the road, by pitying passengers, procured the power of securing for them a wretched bed in the garret of a hedge alehouse, where it appeared very probable that one or both of these unfortunate children would close their existence.

The extraordinary anxiety William had felt, and the exertions he had used, caused his fever to run much higher than Betsey's, and he soon became delirious. The noise he made in this state compelled his mother, and the mistress of the house from time to time, to attend to him, and give him a little water, or milk; and the latter being not so totally ignorant as the former, when assured of the nature of his complaint, administered some neces-

sary medicine, which tended greatly to relieve him.

Poor Betsey from being less violent, lost this benefit, in consequence of which the disease left her weak and sickly, while William, naturally a robust child, struggled through it: he was, however, still very delicate, and scarcely able to rise without assistance, when one morning he remarked to Betsey, "that they had now been awake many hours, and mammy had never been in the room."

"No," said the little girl, "she was gone out when I awoke, and I feel quite sick with hunger, how I wish she would come; Billy, don't you?"

William got out of bed, and as well as he was able, crawled down stairs, he found the whole place in confusion, from the arrival of a company of drovers, who were on their way to a neighbouring fair. Pushing among them as well as he was able, he sought for his mother, whose love of gossiping, he well knew rendered

every crowd an amusement to her; but he sought her now in vain, and was just turning away to assail the humanity of the hostess on Betsey's behalf when she appeared before him, with her hand on the shoulder of a coarse-looking man, whom she addressed with angry vociferation thus:

"Well! to be sure, if there ben't one of the very children as the hussey have left, you see, Mr. Gunner; what a look he have, mare dead than alive, but as hungry as a hawk for all that — well! as long as I have lived in the world, I never thought to have seen such wickedness as to go and throw one's own flesh and blood upon honest people to keep."

"We can't keep 'em; how like a fool thee talks," exclaimed the husband.

"No, to be sure; but then the parish must."

"But the parish neither will, nor can," said the man to whom William was thus pointed out.

From this conversation the poor lad

comprehended that most horrible truth, that his unnatural mother had actually forsaken her children whilst asleep, and that they were left to the wide world, without friends, money, or sustenance, and too ill even to beg their bread. He cast a look of appeal on all around him; the tears gushed from his eyes and streamed down his pale cheeks; but alas, no looks of pity met his unanswered appeal, all were too busy in their own affairs, or too anxious to condemn the vile mother, to attend to her injured and innocent offspring.

At length the press gave way to Mr. Gunner, who, assuming a magisterial step and stentorion tone, enquired of the boy "whither he was going, and where he belonged?"

"We were going to A—— where my mother was born, because it was her parish — but — but ——"

"But what, boy? speak this moment, no lying, no tricks, but what?"

"I believe a soldier's children may be taken in at every parish; Serjeant Hallam said so."

"Oh, did he! then he's a scoundrel for his pains, let him be who he will; aye, aye, let you alone, you young dog, you're deep enough, but I'll let you know what's what. I'll take care to have you off to sea presently, or my name's not John Gunner."

Of all other evils and misfortunes, William had no comparative dread with this, he had seen enough of a seafaring life to show him all its hardships, and they appeared to him of that precise nature to which he was most averse. The habitual dislike which soldiers and sailors have for each other, had undoubtedly nursed this prejudice in him, since he was naturally a courageous, persevering and curious child, and a life of hardship was familiar to him. Turning his eyes in very agony of sorrow, and clasping

his hands in supplication, he dropped on his knees, crying out, " Sir, Sir, oh! pray do not send me to sea, and I will do any thing."

The action and the appearance of William now awakened more general attention in the bye-standers, and several of them took part with the boy, and swore pretty roundly, that if Gunner (who it appeared was the overseer of the parish) did not take proper care of the children, he should be made an example of; and there were not wanting who knew, or pretended to know, that there *was* a law which operated in favour of the widows and orphans of soldiers. Whilst this was debating, the poor sick girl had crept from her mattress, and goaded alike by hunger and alarm from her brother's protracted absence, had crept down and came shivering to his side. At the sight of the innocent sharer of his misfortunes, William wept

afresh, but was unable to reveal the cause of his sorrow. Many were moved by their appearance, but none helped them, farther than to induce Mr. Gunner to drive them before him, weak and faint as they were, to the parish workhouse.

It was quite as great a misfortune to poor William as it could have been to Mr. Gunner and the parish to which he belonged, that they thus became acquainted with each other; for had the poor children been conveyed to the town where their mother originally intended to seek relief, they would have met with every kindness and assistance the nature of their case admitted. The place in question was a large manufacturing town, where although many poor sought relief, yet there was a large fund opened for their support, and the admission of a single family was considered a matter of little moment. The workhouse was large, well appointed,

and well provided, and the overseers men of property and benevolence, who were liberal and conscientious. This description of parish affairs is much more common to large towns, than petty villages, where every transaction being known to all the neighbours, every individual that applies for help is considered a burden on each house in the village, and generally protested against as such; and the overseer of the day generally seeks the approbation of his townsmen, by literally grinding the poor; and should his own temper be mean, or tyrannical, it may easily be conceived to what an excess his exercise of these vices may be carried.

Mr. Gunner was every way unfit for the office he now held, for it was his interest to reduce the poor rates to oblige his customers, as he was a petty shop-keeper. He was naturally of a bad and avaricious temper, and he was completely under the government of a proud

and passionate wife, so that the power he was forbidden to exercise at home, fell with treble force in the place where it could be most felt and deplored.

> Man — vain man,
> Drest in a little brief authority,
> Plays such fantastic tricks before high heaven
> As makes the Angels weep ——

In consequence of Mr. Gunner's management, the abode of poverty was rendered also that of misery and vice; as his niggardly hand was against every inhabitant, so were theirs against him, and every species of fraudful contrivance was daily practised so far as was possible. From a spirit of contradiction to the overseer some degree of kindness was exhibited towards the starving children on their first entrance, but as soon as he departed, they were left to the sole care of his representative the master of the house, and from that time given up to new, but yet severer sufferings than any they had experienced.

Naturally well disposed, and habitually obedient, both the children endeavoured to soften the ill-humour, or deprecate the ferocity of their governors; but every effort proved unsuccessful. Their anxiety as well as their wretched health, did however at length move the pity of an old woman, whom the severity of affliction, not the deficiency of feeling had rendered generally callous; and the kindness of her words, together with occasional good counsel, kept them from sinking into utter despair, or rushing into open defiance of both God and man, an effect ever likely to be produced upon young and ardent spirits, by unwarrantable severity.

Old Sarah revived in the mind of William, his recollections of the good sergeant, and though far inferior to his early friend, she had yet the power of bringing him, in some measure, to look to Heaven for help in his distress, and to believe, that forlorn and bereaved as he found himself to be, he was yet under

the care of an All-wise and Merciful Protector; and as he was pretty generally employed, though not in any way of regular labour, he began to comfort himself with the hope that in time he should learn to earn a subsistence for himself and his sister.

Time, however, only increased the afflictions of this unhappy object of his cares. Betsey continued extremely delicate, and was subject to many a bitter invective, and many a brutal blow, for the very reason which should have awakened compassion, and claimed assistance. So small a portion of food was given to her, and that of so bad a quality, that it was impossible for her to regain strength, and if she expressed the least desire for more, she was tauntingly told, that "sickly people could not eat." Being desirous of employment, she was set to spinning, but as even the most teachable and docile require instruction, the only way taken to make her learn, was by a

stroke from the spindle, or a threat, "that all the yarn she spoiled, should be saved out of her dinners;" yet, even under these difficulties, by the assistance of old Sarah, she became a proficient, and it was talked of in the house, that she should be soon put out as a parish apprentice.

Betsey could have no objection to being sent out of a place, which had been the most terrible prison to her, except as it parted her from that only relation, that single blessing, which comprised all the good existence bestowed upon her, and the very idea of losing whom was death to her. William was pretty generally employed in the garden, or frequently sent of long errands, by people in the village; so that, although under the same roof, they saw but little of each other, and that frequently by contrivance. This little was rendered therefore, especially valuable, and although, when they could steal out into a miser-

able shed, to speak freely to each other, the time was frequently spent almost wholly in tears, yet this time was so inestimably dear, that poor Betsey would almost forego her scanty meal, to finish her hard task, and William urge his jaded strength and blistered feet, to their utmost power, to attain it. Many an unformed plan for future life, many a wild hope and strange project was here named and abandoned; projected and refused; but when Betsey informed her brother of the probability of her removal, and that she might be soon bound to a person, that for many years would be the sole controller of her situation, their anxieties as to the future, absorbed all their distresses for the present moment.

William, in the course of his numerous perambulations about the country, had learnt, that in the neighbouring town, an extensive cotton manufactory was carried on, which was principally worked

by children, taken from the parish poor-houses around. From some he had information, "that this place was well conducted, that the children were well fed and lodged, their labour light, and tending to give them the power of providing for themselves in future life." By others, he was assured, "that a system of tyranny and cruelty obtained in all its stages, that the children were stinted in their food, called to labour during the hours of rest, and the least neglect, or error, even where unintentional, punished with a severity;" at which he shuddered to think, as applying to his sister, for whom he was ever more anxious than himself.

Weighing these various reports as well as he could, William was exceedingly inclined to desire this destiny, merely because it would not part him from Betsey, and under the idea that he could help her in her labour, soothe her under her troubles, and take any punishment as-

signed to her, upon his own shoulders. He now informed her of this idea, and finding her heartily concur in his wishes, they proceeded to communicate their thoughts to old Sarah, and enquire of her, "if there were any means by which they could forward their wishes in this respect?"

"Well-a-day," said the old woman, "that such a thing should ever come into your heads; for my part, I was afeard even to teach the child to spin, for fear they o' the house should think of sending her thither;—mark me, William, if Betsey go there, while a child, she will suffer all sorts of wants, and she never can learn any one thing that'll do her good when she's a woman. As she grows up, she will become wicked in every way, and at last she will die in misery and sin; on the contrary, if she goes into a private family, she may have hardships, but she must gain knowledge;

she will come in time to be a good servant, and if she behaves well, she will go out into the world with a fair character, and may get a good place; and in the end, perhaps, a good husband, and live to be a very decent body, in a cottage of her own; more likely than not."

"I had rather be where William is," said Betsey, with a deep sigh, taking hold of his hand.

William looked at her with great tenderness, but he was silent; Sarah continued to enforce her arguments. "Nobody," said she, "will take a servant out of one of those manufactories, because they never have a character, and what's a woman without a character? Why child, you will know in time, she's nothing at all, —worse than nothing."

"I know that already," said William, "for Sergeant Hallam said so; yes! he said, 'God looks at the heart, but man looks at the character, so always keep yours, Bill.'"

"Then you will send me away!" said Betsey, weeping.

"It is not *me* that does it," answered the poor boy; his heart aching with very sorrow.

In a very short time, a meeting among the parish officers decided this point. William was assigned over to a tanner in the neighbourhood, and Betsey consigned to a single lady, whose last parish apprentice had died of a complaint which she brought into her service; and she protested against receiving another, with great appearance of justice, "who carried death in her face."

In truth, poor Betsey, naturally a pretty, but delicate child, little calculated apparently to bear that "pitiless pelting of the storm," which had assailed her from the cradle, was now partly from her confinement to work and hard usage, and partly from fretting with the dread of losing her brother, become so pale and

thin, that there appeared little prospect besides; and sanguine as the poor boy was, he yet felt as if their separation would soon be eternal.

But what were the fears and feelings of such beings as these in the eyes of those around them? their tears of anguish, their struggle each to support the other, and their last fond embrace, were unseen and disregarded; and while the master of the workhouse pulled away the girl to the house of her future mistress, the constable undertook to deliver William to his future master; each party were unwelcome guests at the house where they were henceforth to be inmates, and were received with those looks of unkindness which fall like ice-bolts on the warm bosoms of confiding youth.

CHAP. III.

Ah, little think the gay, licentious crowd,
— — — —
How many feel this very moment, death
And all the sad varieties of woe.
———— sore pierced by wintry winds,
How many shrink into the sordid hut
Of cheerless poverty.
THOMSON.

MR. HARDY, the person to whom William was henceforward to look up to, as the master, it was his duty, and the guardian, it was his privilege to claim, was a man of some property and consequence in his neighbourhood; for being of an active disposition, and possessing some talents for business, he had engaged in several schemes for the extension of his fortune, which had, by employing his poor neighbours, and increasing the inhabitants of the parish, added to his importance. Amongst other speculations, he had

lately taken a large farm, which being in another parish from that in which he resided, rendered him amenable to the burden of the new apprentice thus imposed; and as the farm in question did not answer, William was the more unwelcome on that account. It was evident, that to a man so situated, with abundance of various business on his hands, a smart, intelligent lad, advancing towards twelve, could be beneficially employed, and hardly fail of being an acquisition; but Mr. Hardy was predetermined to think otherways; it was, therefore, no wonder that his household thought with him, and that another parish apprentice should hold the boy in scorn, even for the very circumstance, which, by uniting their fortunes, might have been supposed to influence their conduct.

To add to his mortification and sorrow, he heard from the family such a character of Mrs. Dorothy Jefferies, the

lady to whom Betsey was apprenticed, that all his fears on her account seemed verified. They were now separated several miles, and the consciousness, that he alone could soothe and support her under her grievances, of whatever description they might be, wrung his heart with anguish. Many times, during the first week of his abode at Mr. Hardy's, he was on the point of soliciting leave to visit her; but conscious of the temerity and impropriety of his request at so early a period, he refrained, and swallowing the lump, which a sense of suffocating sorrow brought into his throat, he endeavoured to resume his employment with that air of cheerful industry and satisfaction, which he hoped would be agreeable in the eye of his master.

But on the second Sabbath, when the ill-humour of his first reception had abated, he thought he might venture to make his petition, and through the medium of a maid servant, he intreated

permission to go; he was informed that his mistress granted it, his master being out. With joyful haste he traversed the fields, and hastened down the road towards that village, where he now considered all his troubles had begun, and being well acquainted with the house that contained his sole treasure, he made directly for it, and knocked gently at the back door, in the hope that his beloved sister herself would answer it.

"Who's there? What do you want?" said a shrill voice from within.

William opened the door slowly, and seeing a pale thin woman, whom he conceived to be Mrs. Jefferies' servant, he made his bow, and begged "just to speak to Betsey."

The person he addressed, turned upon him an eye of such cool malignity, even while she calmly told him to come in, that his heart shrunk under it; her form was so meagre, her limbs so long, and her features so sharp, he could not help

comparing her to a spider that had entangled him in her net, in order to discharge all her venom upon him, and he dreaded to think that his poor timid sister was daily in the fangs of such a fury; but ere he had time to make farther comment, the mistress came, or rather rushed out of the parlour.

The form of Mrs. Jefferies was very different from that of her attendant vestal, her person was full, her complexion florid, and her voice like the roaring of a cataract, heightened at this moment, as it appeared, by violent passion.

So *you* are come, too, you young vagabond, are you? Pray what business have you to come into my house? How many of ye am I to have to eat me up, hey?"

William, alarmed at her appearance and gesticulation, retreated towards the door, saying, "I beg pardon, madam, I only just called, madam, to — to — to see Betsey."

"See Betsey, indeed! see *my* shoe; I'll have no such creatures about my house, coming peeping and prying; I know who sent you, you scoundrel; yes, yes, I know Tom Hardy and all his tricks, I do, I do."

"Mr. Hardy did not send me, madam."

"Oh, he did not! then you come without leave, a pretty confession! do you suppose I shall encourage such ways? No indeed! you shall never see your sister, (if so be she is your sister,) that I can tell you."

"*Mrs.* Hardy said I might come, madam."

"Oh, she did! mighty fine! *Mrs.* Hardy, pray who's she? Old Castletree's daughter, the very man that lent Tom Hardy's uncle the money for the law-suit against my eldest brother. Out of my sight, you impudent puppy, how dare you come into my sight talking of old Castletree, here. Begone, I say, this moment."

Poor William, completely overwhelmed by this torrent of abuse, with the objects of which he was totally unacquainted, and enabled only to perceive, that the mutual enmity between his master and Betsey's mistress would be productive of much sorrow to them both, obeyed the injunction of the passionate woman; and though his retreat was made with rapidity, he was yet aware that he only closed the door just in time to save himself from something which she had flung at him with violence.

There was a small fold which led to the back part of the house, and here poor William could not help lingering till it was nearly dark, in the hope either that the lady's anger would abate, and she might be induced to recall him, or that Betsey would contrive to let him see her. He was not finally disappointed, for just as he was, with a deep sigh, closing the last door, the poor girl ran out and eagerly thanked him for a visit; which

had met with such a sad reception, and which she had heard from her little chamber. She cried all the time she talked to him, and although it was so dark he could not see her, yet he imagined she looked ill, and was weaker than before, She entreated him not to venture on another visit, as it would be worse for her, and perhaps for them both; and on his return her words seemed verified.

Mr. Hardy had spent the evening with a friend, and shared with him a bowl of punch, which had exhilarated his spirits, and raised his courage beyond its usual pitch; he was returning home when he perceived somebody advancing towards his house; and being certain that his family were all within, concluded it was with no good design; he therefore stopped his horse, and with a loud voice commanded the person in his path to stop also. William instantly obeyed, and at the same time gave his master to understand, "'that it is was only him."

"You! what right have you to be out! Where have you been, you scoundrel? Answer this moment?"

"I went to Mrs. Jefferies's, Sir, just to see — —"

"To *that* old cat's," exclaimed Mr. Hardy, at the same time striking him a violent blow with the but-end of the whip in his hand, which he was about to repeat, when his servant man hearing his voice, came out, and was followed by Mrs. Hardy, who seeing William hold his head, was aware of his master's situation, and said, "my deary, you are not quite right to-night, I gave the boy leave to go out; to be sure he is rather late, but that ill-natured woman very likely would not let him see his poor sister."

"Sister me — no sister's, Mrs. Hardy, nobody in my house shall go near *her's*, that's all I have to say; but as for this vagabond I'll clear my house of him presently; to-morrow morning I'll go to Justice Greenhorn's, and get him sent to sea;

Gunner's an honest fellow, he told me 'twas the only way with him."

So saying, he turned and gave William two or three smart lashes with the whip, which he still held in his hand, notwithstanding the anxious interference of his wife, whom he finally quarrelled with in turn; but William creeping up into his cock-loft, only heard as the last words of his master, "that on the morrow, so sure as he lived, he should be sent to sea for an idle vagabond."

The smart of his wounds, and the deeper pain of his mind, prevented the poor boy from thinking of reposing. As he sat ruminating on the floor, the light of the rising moon by degrees shone into his humble lodging, and made him sensible of the lapse of time. "In two or three hours," said he, "all the family will be stirring, and I shall be taken away, and sent to a life I loathe; all hope of change or relief will then be over, I cannot escape from ship-board;

now I can be free, and I *will*; Sergeant Hallam himself could not blame me."

With these words he sprung up, and taking off his shoes, ran nimbly down stairs, and let himself out at the kitchen door, and thence in a short time reached the high road, on which he walked as fast as he was able, his heart beating violently all the time, and his whole frame agitated by a sense of error, overcome only by the fear of greater miseries than he had yet endured.

When William had walked far enough from his late home, to be out of the sight of any of its inhabitants, he recollected himself so far as to turn once more towards that of his sister, where he arrived still in the deep of night. A little dog within heard his footsteps, and began to bark, a circumstance he scarcely regretted as he wished so far to disturb his sister, as to give her notice of his departure; but his wishes were frustrated, and after lingering about until day-break, he was reluctantly compelled to withdraw, con-

scious that he had now passed all bounds of forgiveness, and that his master and the justice would be indeed furnished with an excellent reason for sending him on ship-board.

Yet to forsake Betsey as it were by a deed of his own, appeared cruel; and many a piercing sigh escaped his lips, and many a broken ejaculation rose from his heart, as he turned to gaze again for the last time, on the house where she now enjoyed, perhaps in sleep, a happier dream of him; and at length he found himself compelled to run down a steep hill, which was an effectual barrier to that world where he had lingered too long for his own safety.

William continued to walk in a direct line until he found himself completely wearied and overcome with hunger and fatigue, when leaving the high-road he sought in the meadows for a safe resting-place, and was not long before he found a little hovel into which he crept. But alas! hunger is no friend to sleep; and

notwithstanding the poor boy's weariness, it was some time before he found the repose necessary to relieve his aching limbs. Unhappily for him it was now early spring, and the earth yielded neither berry, nor pulse, which could sustain life; so that when he awoke, he felt, in all its terrible cravings, that hunger which is a grievance those only can properly estimate, who like him have been subjected to the endurance of it.

To add to his present affliction, it was now nearly dark, and the country around thinly inhabited, so that it was scarcely probable that he could arrive at any house to beg a morsel of food before the family had retired to rest. Urged by his wants, and relieved from his weariness, he however determined to try, and as he had ceased to fear pursuit, feeling indeed that none cared for him sufficiently to follow him through the night, he returned to the high road, and continued walking, until his strength was quite exhausted, before he saw any

building resembling a house; and when at length he reached a little row of neat cottages by the road side, he perceived that all were silent, and the inhabitants, buried in slumber, could neither listen to his complaints, nor relieve his distresses.

If our poor wanderer had not been already a veteran in suffering, such was the extremity of his want at this time, that he would undoubtedly have made an effort for relief by claiming assistance from his fellow-creatures. But ill as he was, William did not consider himself dying, and he apprehended that anger for disturbing them, was full as likely to be the consequence of awaking them, as pity for his wants; and the idea of being given up to his late master as an idle and worthless vagrant, still operated on his mind with all the train of punishment in their power to bestow.

He therefore sat down, and nestling under the walls of the houses, patiently

awaited the return of day; and when at length the morn arose, with renewed hopes and fears, listened to the movements of the labourer, and considered how to awaken compassion for his circumstances, without suspicion as to his situation. While thus revolving in his mind, a heavy stage coach was heard approaching, and the passengers, roused by the bright beams of the sun, began to look out of the windows. In doing this a lady who had probably been eating buns or biscuits, shook the handerchief out of the window which had contained them, and the welcome sight of the falling crumbs induced poor William to start on his feet and make instantly to the place; but ere he approached, conscious how very insufficient this supply must be, he pulled off his hat and approached the vehicle as a beggar. The coach was slowly dragging up a hill, and the lady had time to observe him. Looking out, with a solemn voice she thus replied to

the silent appeal made by the starving boy and his uplifted hat.

"Go home, child, and pray for the grace of God."*

The moment after, a gentleman who sat opposite to her, threw William a sixpence into his hat.

"Your charity is misplaced, Sir," said the lady. "You have misled the young by blameable encouragement."

"I did not mean to be charitable, Ma'am, it did not enter my head at all."

"No, Sir?"

"No, Ma'am, I merely meant to remind you of what St. James tells us, about saying to the poor, "Be ye warmed and filled;" but withholding the means, you have been preaching to me all night, so allow me to practise in the morning for your instruction."

William took the sixpence with eyes of glistening gratitude, but while he carefully treasured it, the wants of nature

* A fact.

urged him to gather the crumbs which had just fallen, with an avidity which affected the outside passengers, and a number of half-pence were instantly showered about him. By the time William had collected this treasure, the cottages were opened, the labourers sallied out, and in a short time a basin of wholesome milk and a slice of bread were once more in the hands of the famishing boy.

William husbanded his little property, and as his object was to get completely beyond the probability of pursuit (although his thoughts were perpetually divided between desires for his own safety and the power of residing near poor Betsey), he continued to leave the country where he had been stationed, (which was Lancashire) and by degrees he became far advanced in the West-riding of Yorkshire, where perceiving the country very populous, and abounding in all the necessaries of life, he wished to remain, and if possible pick

up the means of existence by any employment within his stength and ability.

Coals being very plentiful, and generally laid down in loads at the street doors, and afterwards got in by poor people, afforded him in towns the means of food, but he rarely was able to pay even the trifle demanded for a poor lodging; and if at any time he ventured to beg, he was threatened, as of old, with being sent to his own parish, or to sea; so that as soon as advancing summer promised work in the fields, he left the town, and endeavoured to gain little jobs by assisting farmers' servants, holding horses on the road, or in any way working; he was never a niggard of his toil, and where the means of helping any one in his power occurred, he not only readily accorded it, but really rejoiced in it. Alas! unhappy and cut off from society as he was, and often led to the very gates of despair by the forlornness of his situation, to be able in the slightest degree to assist

another, gave him a little importance in his own eyes; it re-united him to that nature from which misfortune had exiled him, and told him, wretched and isolated as he was, yet a link still bound him to humanity; he was not "one of the beasts that perish."

Long before this time, his shoes had been completely worn out, and though the charitable had, from time to time, given him a pair of old ones, he had found himself so much more comfortable without them, that after a short trial he had left them behind him; but one day, early in his wanderings, being requested by an old woman who gathered water-cresses to give a pair he was pulling off to her, he was led to examine her, and finding, that from the scantiness of her cloathing, and her advanced age, that she was more deplorably situated than himself, he pulled off his ragged stockings, and gave her *them* also, concluding that as his feet were now completely inured to

the weather his legs would soon be in the same happy condition.

Farther than these unavoidable appearances of beggary, William endeavoured to look as decent as he could; and as he had been accustomed from his birth to observe personal appearances attended to, it was certain he preserved them even in beggary longer than many could have done; and his frequent habit of washing his hands and face, and bathing whenever he had an opportunity, contributed greatly to his health, and still more to that resolution and cheerfulness which enabled him to exist under so many privations, without doing one act which disgraced him. In the midst of the sharpest poverty, and possessing abilities for contrivance, and courage for execution, he yet, "kept his hands from picking and stealing," and his heart open to the affections and charities of his nature. In his lonely rambles and solitary hiding-places, he retraced the

maxims of the good sergeant; and imperfectly as they were traced, and oddly as they were combined, yet were they a mine of wealth to him, from whence he drew the solace and the treasure of existence.

When the hay-making time came on, William fondly hoped that he should be well employed; but as he was too young, and in fact too weak, on trial, to be considered a labourer, he found himself foiled in this hope, and at the time he presented himself, as we have seen, in the fields of Farmer Forrester, he had been for several days employed, rather than rewarded, and was reduced to live principally on ears of unripe corn, field-pease, or other similar produce, though he was ever ready to lend a hand on every occasion. Yet never till now had the voice of sympathy touched his heart, even where help had been administered to him; it was therefore no wonder that the kindness of Elizabeth was grateful

to his feelings as the dews of Heaven to the parched soil, and that he followed her as by instinct to the lowly dwelling where her husband was already awaiting her return.

"Thou art very late to-night?" said Joseph Allen to his wife as she entered, in a complaining tone.

"I have had an accident," said Betty holding up her hand, "but it is not a bad one."

"So much the better; but what brings that lad? He seems a strange ragamuffin."

"He is a very poor creature, sure enough, but that's no reason for us to slight him, Joseph — there was a time when He who made heaven and earth had not where to lay his head."

"Umph," said Joseph, very surlily, turning into the house, for he did not know what to say, being very anxious to appear, and indeed to be as good as his wife, but by no means inclined to show

his goodness in the same way; he often thought Betty more charitable than a woman in such circumstances ought to be; but as she was very industrious and healthy, whereas he, though willing to work, was sickly; as she had brought him no child, and one which he had by a former wife was taken care of by that wife's sister, Betty was always furnished with so many good reasons for her conduct, that Joseph knew not how to reply, consistent with his profession as a religious man. Moreover Joseph was sincerely attached to Betty, who, although considerably younger than himself, was in every sense a most excellent wife and desirable companion to him; he therefore more generally contented himself with finding fault with her conduct, than absolutely thwarting her wishes, and instead of preventing her from following the pursuit he disapproved, he only rendered her unhappy in the prosecution

of it. A kind of silent persecution to which many people subject their dependents, who would not for the world be thought deficient in the characteristics of a true Christian, although nothing can be more incompatible with the simplicity, affability, forbearance and openness of that spirit, which Christianity teaches.

Betty beckoned William to come forward, and pointed to a three-legged stool, which stood so close to the threshold that in permitting him to sit down upon it, she scarcely could be said to invite him into the house of her husband whom she desired at once to propitiate in his favour, and yet to obey as her own lawful lord and the just controller of her conduct. Had this poor woman been asked to define her feelings, or explain her sentiments at this time, it is certain she would have been unable to do it; nevertheless they were those of the truest delicacy, the most noble compassion,

and would have done honour to the most polished and enlightened female in the highest rank of life.

The first care of Elizabeth was to prepare the supper which she was conscious Joseph had occasion for; and notwithstanding the state of her hand made this a painful exertion, she executed it with celerity, and placed it before him with a good-tempered wish; but she did not appear inclined to take her own portion, until Joseph, having somewhat appeased his hunger, invited her, in a tone which indicated returning kindness; and the second time he spoke was with the addition, "Thee can'st give the lad some if thou likest."

Elizabeth gave William a portion of the potatoes which she had mashed for supper; and when he had eaten them, she told him there was a little shed at the back of the house, where he might sleep if he liked; it would keep him from the weather, adding, "if *you* have no ob-

jection, Joseph." "Not I," answered the husband, laconically.

When Betty showed William the almost roofless ruins of her pig-stye, she pressed him not to go away in the morning, to which he thankfully agreed; but her heart was very full when she bade him good night; and on her return into the cottage, the tears were running down her cheeks. Joseph was softened, for Betty was a woman who always struggled to overcome her feelings, he was therefore aware that they were very acute at this moment, and certain recollections about the last tears he had seen her shed, came over him. "This beggar lad has been filling thy head with some fine tale, I see," said he.

"He has told me nothing but truth, I am certain," said she, "and I do think a deal about him, that I cannot deny; poor child, his father was killed in America."

"More the pity, but we can't help that."

"His mother has forsaken him."

"More shame for *her*, but what can we do?"

"We can do every thing, Joseph, if *you* please, we can take him and make a man of him; he will soon be able to earn his own bread, he can begin to make bricks directly; and if he could get to work at the furnace with you, he would soon earn money—he might be a son and a comfort to us both."

"He can never be a son of mine, but if thou choosest to burden thyself with him, why do; that's all. Its not much to me, when I'm pretty middling, and if I am bad again, the Lord will, I trust, provide for me; the poor-house is open, that's a comfort; 'tis a plain case thee had rather work for a stranger, than for me."

Betty's face for a moment flushed with anger at this ungenerous conclusion, but

she checked all speech, remembering, that, "a mild answer turneth away wrath;" and as soon as she could speak without any tone of complaint, or vexation, she thus addressed him.

"I must own, Joseph, I could like very much to take this poor lad, for it seems as if the Lord had cast him in my way, to supply to me the want of a son, which is undoubtedly a blessing, and I think I have the more right to take him, because your sister-in-law never allowed me to be a mother to your child. I therefore honestly own, that if you allow me to keep him here, I will be very thankful; but if he become troublesome, to you, or burdensome to me, so far as to hinder me from doing my duty to you, I declare, Joseph, most solemnly, I will part with him immediately."

"If he were sick, couldst thee turn him out, hey?"

Betty could only answer this question "by trusting in God, that he would not

be sick," and although Joseph considered the idea altogether imprudent, yet he too was unwilling to show any deficiency in *faith;* he therefore gave a reluctant consent; and Betty, thankful for obtaining any, lifted up her heart in thankfulness to God, silently resolving, that according to her utmost she would be such a mother to one party as she had been a wife to the other; and not doubting but that the great Father of them all, would provide for them all.

Yet happy as she felt, she was prudent enough to permit the poor boy to remain in his present hovel, rather than by a hasty and joyful welcome, she should increase the suspicions Joseph seemed willing to entertain; and although her own night was rendered sleepless, she permitted him to prove the truth of his promise; and accordingly, when she arose, he was standing by her threshold, willing to receive assistance and thankful for it, but not intruding upon

her for it, — he was silent, but not sorrowful, an air of quiet confidence and unobtrusive gratitude marked his manners.

But when Betty, taking him by the hand with an air of solemn kindness, and affecting, but not painful seriousness, led him forward, and told him that so long as he was obedient and industrious, he should live in her house, and be to her as a son; he listened with a look of such intense anxiety, as of a blessing he wished to secure, yet hardly dared to enjoy, that Joseph himself, just then entering the room, owned, " it was wonderful to see," and bade him good morrow, in a tone that convinced him he might venture to believe, and with a voice choaked with emotion, he endeavoured to stammer out his thanks for the goodness he experienced, and a promise of deserving it by every attention in his power.

Elizabeth had not taken this charge upon herself, without calculating on her

means of doing it, although great confidence in the Divine goodness had doubtless been her chief reliance, yet she determined so to commence her new duties, that no after-reckoning should warrant either the blame of her husband, or the reproaches of her adopted son. Accordingly, when she had made the boiled milk for her husband's breakfast, and her own, she made a large bason of hasty pudding, which is at once a nutritive and cheap diet, for William, and which being given in cleanliness and comfort, was to him a most desirable portion.

In a very few days, by the care of Elizabeth, poor William was initiated into the art of brick-making, and constituted one of a gang,* who, with many others, were then working in that neighbourhood.

As an employment, this was particu-

* A gang of Brickmakers consists of three persons.

larly unpleasant to him, on account of the unavoidable dirtiness it imposed; but being not only determined to learn to work, but conscious that his new and worthy mother had an undoubted right to his obedience, he complied with cheerfulness, and soon became so remarkably expert at the trade, that he took nearly as much money as the most experienced brick-maker.

When returning from his labour, the knowledge that he had a home to which he could look, a clean bed on which he could repose, and a hearty welcome, filled his heart with joy and gratitude; and these sensations he felt in a stronger degree, and with a sweeter, livelier emotion, when on the following Sunday, Elizabeth having, by expending all the late gains of the harvest, procured him shoes and other necessaries, took him to the meeting-house, and admitted him to kneel between her and Joseph.

Long harassed and despised, a wretch-

ed outcast, and forsaken wanderer, no wonder that the youthful heart of William expanded to the sense of joy and gratitude awakened by this change; and that in the ardent addresses of the officiating preacher his heart ascended with a fervour of devotion never felt till now, save when his prayer was offered for the good sergeant, whom, at this moment, he also remembered with the most lively gratitude.

But there was one still more dear, for whom he besought that Divine goodness, on which he now relied with firmness; this was poor Betsey, on whom he perpetually thought, not less desirous of hearing of her welfare, than of conveying her the welcome intelligence of his own. Elizabeth had promised to procure a friend to write to the village where she resided, and as William perceived that in the little congregation now assembled, every one appeared intimately acquainted with their neighbours' affairs, he ventured

to remind Elizabeth of his sister; and true to her promise, she immediately applied to the daughter of a farmer, who promised to make all possible enquiry.

The portion of learning in our little family it will be perceived was very small; the master of it could neither read nor write, but his wife could read pretty tolerably, although a stranger to the use of the pen. Our poor beggar boy, under the care of the sergeant, had at one time read very well, and began to cypher a little, but it was now so long since he had even seen a book, that he dreaded to find that his knowledge in this respect was flown. Happily a very short time enabled him to read as well as ever he had done, and Betty's well-worn Bible became a fund of delight to him and edification to his protectors; and when to this was added an old copy of the Pilgrim's Progress long hoarded by Joseph as the property of his former wife, their pleasure was inconceivable;

sitting all together, their knees meeting, their eyes glistening, and their hearts glowing, every word read by the boy conveyed either knowledge or delight; and although many a literal interpretation was given to an emblematical figure, and many a conclusion drawn, unwarranted by knowledge, and sometimes perhaps at war with common sense, yet so much of holy faith, pious hope, and universal love, was awakened in their bosoms, that to a philanthropic mind it was sweet to contemplate them. At these times, all of asperity in Joseph's temper was completely banished, till earth-born cares, and earth-born occupations, by renewing the rememberance of his poverty, renewed the fears that belong to poverty. Though he could not read, he was by no means so ignorant as might have been expected; for his memory being very tenacious, and his mind much exercised on religious subjects, he scarcely ever forget any sermon, chapter,

or serious discourse; and his knowledge of scripture history far exceeded that of many people who are masters of much time and extensive libraries. Elizabeth's knowledgê, like that of her husband, was confined to the book of God, which she had studied, till it might be said that every page was imprinted on her very heart. In every species of trial, in every hour of rejoicing, and under all kinds of difficulties and embarrassments, she had recourse to this medium of consolation, joy, or information; and her habit rendered this mode of guidance as valuable to her now, as her principles had done in earlier days; it was the very food and essence of her mental existence, at once the beginning and end of her views, the life of her life.

Being naturally a clever, sprightly woman, who, born under more favourable circumstances, would probably have been considered a woman of talents, it was no wonder that her imagination some-

times mingled its sublime, but undirected flights, too far in subjects of such awful import; or that she was apt to quote from the sacred text too much upon all possible occasions. In doing this, Elizabeth lay open to the charge of hypocrisy and enthusiasm, from those who did not comprehend that taste, not affectation influenced her language, and a warmth of devotion, perhaps inconceivable to *them*, yet compatible with a sound understanding, directed her actions. Whatever they might adjudge her, by comparing her with others who pretend to similar conduct or manners, it is however certain, that she was neither a dissembler, nor a fanatic, but a simple, well-meaning and truly pious woman, capable of more self-denial, generosity, activity and patience, than many of much higher claims and superior advantages.

The happy calm enjoyed for a very short time in Joseph Allen's family, was

but the forerunner of violent storms and bitter persecutions, which assailed them in consequence of their charitable action to poor William. It was declared by many of their neighbours to be an act of "most shameful and unjust pride, it being well known that Joseph being though industrious, a slow workman, could scarcely maintain himself, and Betty though she spun all winter and worked at husbandry in summer, had quite enough to do with her earnings." Others maintained that the boy was taken to make a show of being religious, and even many of her own sect inveighed bitterly against it, as having taken a reprobate and vagabond to her arms, when she might have succoured the child of a *believer*. But what was worst of all, the parish officers at length interfered and threatened the wanderer with sending him back to the place where he came from.

To that place poor William had now a

greater aversion than ever, in consequence of the information conveyed in answer to Betty's inquires, "that the parish apprentice of Miss Jefferies was dead." If poor Betsey were indeed gone, the world was to him a complete blank beyond the walls which gave him refuge, and the place where she met her fate doubly hateful, since he was persuaded that ill usage had facilitated her death. Sometimes the recollection that the former apprentice died in Miss Jefferies' service, induced him to believe there was some mistake, and this, in the moment of hope to which youth ever fondly clings, he would urge to his adopting mother; but Betty, who did not doubt the fact herself, ever discouraged the idea, and insisted on him remaining at all events with them until he should be compelled to return, being fearful that he should set out to ascertain the fact.

Week after week presented new difficulty; but by an industry which chal-

lenged approval, a submission which disarmed malignity, and that quiet perseverance in well-doing, which rendered even persecution ashamed, Betty at length succeeded in retaining her prize, and had the satisfaction to observe him in every respect improving under her judicious and affectionate controul. But alas! winter now came on, and with it all Joseph's train of symptoms; and after various struggles he was at length obliged to yield, and become a stationary invalid, during that season when the means of life are procured with the greatest difficulty; and to complete this misfortune, there was no longer any brick-making for poor William, who looked round in vain for some employment, the business of husbandry being completely at a stand still.

Want again stared him in the face, and he now thought it had accumulated horrors, since he was more shocked at the sufferings to which his kind mother

and her afflicted partner were exposed, than those which touched himself only; and he had the additional pain of knowing, that let the suffering be ever so acute, Betty would not obtain any relief from the parish, so long as he remained in her house; and that it was but too likely he should be expelled thence, and returned to his parish, from whence having flown clandestinely, would now ignominiously punish him, by sending him to sea, whither he now began to wish he had been sent by the angry overseer.

One privation now succeeded another, and each of them went to poor William's heart, as if he were the cause of all. Betty relinquished, with cheerfulness, her Sunday cup of tea, observing only, "that the Bible would not be less sweet without it;" and although William's voice faultered, as he began to read, and he frequently felt that he was unintelligible, she still spoke as cheerfully as usual, and entered into conversation on the subject, with all her

wonted interest; but when the time came that her old man had no longer his pipe, when Joseph, with a deep sigh, regarded his tobacco-box as it lay empty before him, and then slowly lifting up his eyes, looked at William, it might be truly said, "the iron entered into her soul;" her very heart was wrung with anguish, and a tear of agonising sorrow stole into her eyes, but her soul ascended to God, in silent prayer, and obtained the serenity it sought.

Betty did not at this time forget her promise, "never to let the stranger boy interfere with her higher duties," but as every day she sent him out to seek employment, and every day she certainly hoped he would find something, she could not be said hitherto to have broken it; but just as she was compelled to give him up, the winter frosts set in, and a gentleman in the neighbourhood began to fell some wood. The excellent advice she had given William, to be ever in the way of

help, operated now; for he obtained immediate employment, although he was not of an age to undertake the more laborious part of the work. Sincere joy, the consciousness of being useful, as well as independent, inspired him apparently with strength as well as zeal; and he performed his daily tasks so much to the satisfaction of his employers, that he was frequently rewarded with a little bundle of brush-wood into the bargain. William, naturally ingenious, picked out from these, slips which were capable of being made into wedges, to prevent windows from rattling; or pegs for the fastening of clothes upon lines; and when he got home, he made them. Joseph, by degrees began to help him, and found the employment a great relief from the melancholy which oppressed him, from sitting alone, and unemployed, which added much to his complaint. When a sufficient number were made, Betty undertook a journey to the nearest market-town, to sell them; and found

so much greater success than she had apprehended from such a cause, that on her return, she magnified it almost into a miracle. Her gains nearly paid the little rent, which, for the first time in her life, she had this year resigned all hope of raising.

One morning, when William was, as usual, piling up bundles of brush-wood, the owner of the premises came into the ground, and addressing the principal man, asked, "if there were a person who could go on an errand decently; I mean, have you one who can read a direction, and give an answer as he ought?" The man pointed out William to the gentleman, observing, "he is a decent, civil lad as ever I saw, Sir, only a little shabby, and the like of that; but howsomdever, if your honour's in a hurry, he may put on my coat, and so cover his rags."

The coat was put on, and William immediately dispatched to the next village, where he was under a necessity of wait-

ing some time, but had the satisfaction of executing the business as he ought. As he was returning, it began to rain large drops, and William, who had often surveyed himself, buttoned up in the handsome coat lent him by the master-carpenter, thought it was very wrong to get it wet while in his possession, he therefore took it off, and rolling it carefully up, tucked it under his arm, and began to run as fast as he could, to keep him from feeling the loss of it. Being so long delayed, obliged him to go to the gentleman's house, and it so happened, he arrived there just as he was, with his lady, alighting from his carriage; and being anxious about the business, he stopped to speak with him in the hall.

"So you met with Dickinson, my boy, at last, hey?"

"Yes, Sir, and he wrote that note, in answer to yours; but after he had sealed it, he recollected he had not put the money in, so he sent it by me, Sir."

"Ha, ha, ha! that is just like Dickinson, is it not, my dear?" said the gentleman to his wife.

"It is, indeed; nobody would have sent seven pounds by such a poor lad as that, but him."

The gentleman looked at William, he was now wet, and of course appeared more deplorable than he had done in the morning. "I thought Johnson lent you a coat," said he suspiciously eyeing him as he counted his notes.

"Yes, Sir, he did, but it rained; and so I pulled it off, as it was'nt my own."

"Ha, ha, ha! a better Irishman than the other," laughed the gentleman, in recovered good humour.

The lady looked earnestly at the boy, who was not ragged, but patched with many colours, and whose open, simple manners, indicated as much honesty as care and prudence; and while her husband with a thoughtless air, gave the boy half-a-crown, which, though, in her

opinion was too much money by half for the occasion, she yet ordered her footman to bring down a suit of clothes lately left off by their eldest son, and which she bestowed on the thankful, happy William, telling him at the same time, "she hoped he would give the money to his parents, for she was certain they were respectable people, from his appearance."

When William got out of the house, he found it still rained, and he felt a good deal tired; but a certain earnest desire had entered his mind, and he could not resist indulging it: therefore, he once more set off for the village, and, whistling one of his mother's hymn-tunes, he sprung forward, light of heart, and had the satisfaction to effect his purpose, and then return home in time to ease poor Betty's fears, who, ever dreading, lest he should leave them, and never having known him so late before, was uneasy to the greatest degree, and hailed his return

with joy, in which Joseph was no longer slow to join her.

William explained his absence in a few words: "He had been an errand for Squire Tomlinson, he had been round since his return, to take the carpenter's coat, and he had got a present of a coat of his own."

Betty took up the coat to admire it; but what could it be that was in the pockets? on one side she found half a pound of tobacco, in the other a little tea, sugar, and a loaf, and as she spread them on the table, William sprung to the shelf, and reaching down poor Joseph's well-worn pipe, he cried, "now let me see you fill it, and then I shall be happy."

"Thou art a good lad, sure enough," said Joseph; and these words were, from him, great praise. Betty's eyes were full of tears, but they were joyful ones; for the praise of her poor boy, and the pleasure of seeing her husband treated

by him, were equally sweet, and never was a little feast partaken by three people with more real pleasure, nor more sincere gratitude to that Divine Being whom they ever considered as the giver of every good gift.

CHAP. IV.

Thou art religion's advocate — take heed
Hurt not the cause thy pleasure 'tis to plead.
CRABBE.

The spirits of Joseph, somewhat restored by his tobacco, induced him to make various exertions under the teaching even of poor William, who, during his abode in the workhouse, had learned to weave cabbage nets, make matches and laces; and these employments, although they produced little profit, were yet some assistance, and they certainly tended so far towards the poor man's health, that early in the spring he became able to return to his employment, and enter into the comforts of his usual humble but contented station.

William had been very desirous of gaining admission into the manufactory,

in which Joseph held a very subordinate department; but at this time trade was very indifferent, so that the master could not be prevailed upon to agree with him, and as the wood-cutting was over, he was again compelled to seek for employment. The lady at the Hall did not forget him; and from time to time, he was employed on errands which he ever found profitable, and sometimes he worked for the gardener, at others, the carpenter who resided in the neighbourhood would give him a few days' work upon something within his power to perform, and this was ever a delightful period of occupation to him, for he now began to feel conscious of a powerful bias in his mind towards the formation of utensils, in preference to husbandry of any kind, and he ardently desired the power of entering into a manufactory, especially one that would give him the exercise of his own taste and ingenuity.

The decent clothing in which he now

appeared on suitable occasions, happily prevented him from being recognised or pointed out, as Betty Allen's vagabond boy; and the loud or whispered threat of being driven from the parish no longer assailed him; and as his gains increased, at the same time with those of his kind protectors, Betty insisted on the power he now possessed of saving a little money to help his education. William had, indeed, already put by many odd pennies for the purpose of collecting a fund which should enable him to re-visit, in a respectable manner, the village he had left, just to ascertain where poor Betsey was buried, to weep over her grave, and learn the particulars he yet dreaded to hear concerning her death. On confessing this to his only friend she intreated him to give it up as being full of danger to himself, and pointed out, how much more wise it would be to learn to write, in which case he could make every enquiry necessary for his satisfaction, with-

out running the risk of being seized by the overseers.

William listened to this prudent advice, and an evening school at the neighbouring village soon supplied all his deficiencies. Anxious to improve, and feeling the full value of that time and money which could only be supplied from his own unceasing labours, or the assistance of that kind mother, who had with so large a heart so narrow a purse; he soon made a proficiency which surprised his competitors, and bespoke talents as well as industry. But, alas! long walks after hard workings, and meals pinched for the purpose of gaining the implements necessary for prosecuting his laudable design of improvement, combined with the heat of the weather to impair his strength, and Elizabeth, to her great sorrow, perceived that he was now, if possible, looking worse than when, a year ago, she took him under her protection.

With all the tenderest cares of friend-

ship, she applied herself to obviate the danger that threatened him, living on the plainest food herself, she bestowed on him the most nutritious in her power to procure, and going out every day to the labours of the harvest, she yet insisted that he should remain at home to read the Bible, prepare the pottage for Joseph, practise at his slate, or in any way beguile the time, so as to contribute to his health and amusement; and many a time, after she bade him good-bye, would she return to look once more through the window, and as she gazed on his pale face, lift up her heart to Heaven, and pray for blessings on his head.

For more than three months did poor William hang a burden on the hands of this poor woman, who struggled with the greatest difficulties to procure him assistance meet for his complaint, and who dreaded the return of winter, lest still greater hardships than she had yet known, should be in his train; but who still kept up her reliance on the Divine assistance,

and that cheerfulness of aspect, which, to her desponding husband and sick guest, were the sole source of comfort, and inspired both with the only means of averting the evils which affected or threatened them. Poor William, during this melancholy period had tried every little art in his power, and among others, he had made a kind of cage for a squirrel, which though rudely finished, was yet regarded by Betty as indicative of great powers, and she declared, that when she had time, she would go to W——, and sell it for him.

"But I wish to give it," said William, "to the lady's little son, who gave me my clothes."

Joseph ridiculed this idea, but Betty supported it; she said "ingratitude was as the sin of witchcraft, and it was only right that the boy should show he had it not: she knew 'God loved a cheerful giver,' and if the widow's mite was not forgotten before him, why should the orphan's?"

Joseph agreed to all that was supported by Scripture reasons; and Betty had herself the satisfaction of presenting the cage to little Master Tomlinson, who, like all other children, was delighted with his prize; and, anxious also to show *his* gratitude, loudly insisted on sending the good boy the little pig, which a few days before had been nominated his, on account of its extraordinary beauty.

Reward for an act of duty was the last thing Betty thought of, and she hastily withdrew, satisfied with the praises bestowed on her darling, and anxious only for his welfare.

The little boy, in exhibiting his present, still however most vehemently urged his desire to give the pig in return for the squirrel's cage, and his father, to keep the peace, permitted him to take his own way; "he was the youngest, all the rest were at school, and 'twas no great matter to pet him a little." The mother allowed it from a higher motive: a pig was a

valuable property to a poor man, and she commissioned the servant who attended her son on this worthy errand, to say, "that the gardener would give the boy a good part of the means of feeding his pig, if he would come for it on Mondays and Thursdays."

This was indeed a joyful present to William, who used his utmost strength to repair the old pig-stye, once his own lodging, for its reception; and did not fail, (though he required Joseph's staff to assist him) to wait on the gardener, at the appointed time. At his second visit he was seen by the lady, who was his benefactress; and observing his pale complection, she enquired humanely after his health, and rendered him such essential assistance from her good table, that in a little time he began to recover his strength and activity; and Elizabeth, though worn down herself, saw the second winter set in with far better prospects than the first, and Joseph, though given to despondency,

no longer wounded her feelings, by giving hints of the expense of her favourite.

Under the judicious care of Betty, and the activity of William, the pig grew fat; and as William, going so frequently, and being often employed, was also nearly fed at the Hall, while his earnings were added to the general stock; all things were going well with this little family, when a new and unexpected trouble at once crushed their comforts, and compelled them to separation.

We have already mentioned the circumstance of Joseph's having a daughter, by a former wife, who was brought up by that wife's sister. This girl was now about fourteen, she resided at a distance of nearly forty miles; and although, in her letters, which were not frequent, she had repeatedly expressed a strong desire to see her father, yet there appeared little probability of such an interview taking place, when one day a letter to

Joseph, containing the following words, astonished them all.

"DEAR FATHER,

"I am exceedingly sorry to inform you that my aunt is dead, after an illness of three days; and as she had put me apprentice to a mantua-maker a year ago, I had not the satisfaction of being with her at the last. I am very sorry to tell you, that five guineas is due to my mistress on my account, which my aunt had agreed to pay this Christmas, and she has been so hard as to take my clothes until she is satisfied, because she finds my aunt has not left me the fifty pound, which she always promised me. I beg to hear from you directly, being in great distress, not having a home in this country, nor the means of coming to you, until you provide it; and full of dread, lest my misfortunes should set my mother-in-law against me; but I remain, dear father,

"Your dutiful daughter,

"MARY ALLEN."

The very reading of this sad letter brought on all Joseph's winter complaints, and poor William beheld at once, that there was no longer a home for him, as he occupied the only chamber, or rather loft, in the cottage, and slept in the tidy bed prepared for this very daughter, by the mother-in-law she so unjustly dreaded. But whatever might be his fears or feelings, they were far short of Betty's; for she perceived at once, that she must not only part with a child on whom she had fixed her affections, and who warmly and gratefully returned her love, but that she must receive a child prejudiced against her; one too who had been used to many more comforts than she could bestow, and was probably little able to help her, or to estimate the difficulties she must encounter. For a short time her very heart seemed to tremble, but when she had withdrawn, and addressed herself to the Throne of Grace for support, she returned with renovated

spirits, and a strong desire to evince that resolution which she knew to be necessary for them all. Her heart sunk as she passed poor Joseph, who sat on his chair, striving in vain to conquer his feelings; he was the image of despair; how to gain his child, and to pay her debt he knew not, and yet he felt that both must be done immediately.

William's eyes were fixed on the ground as if he felt unequal to looking at his lot; yet his mind was busied on the subject; he saw his duty and he strove to perform it.

"We will pay two pounds now," said Betty, "and the rest as soon as we are able; our landlord will look over us a little while, I warrant ye."

Joseph answered by a groan.

"We can sell — what can we sell, think you, Joseph?"

"There is the pig, in the first place," said William.

Joseph started: this was indeed a trea-

sure; it offered a ray of light to his benighted mind, and though a deep sigh followed, yet Betty traced the workings of his heart with pleasure.

"We are sure," said she, "that something will be done: I have two hens, you know, and I can part with my light-coloured gown. — Oh there are many ways in which the Lord will give us help: he never fails those that trust in him. 'We are of more value than many sparrows, yet even one of them cannot fall but he seeth it.'"

"I have three mole-traps, and ten bundles of skewers," said William, repeating this inventory with an air that spoke volumes of kindness to the mind of Betty. She found her heart unable to sustain the idea of sending him away; and, in her anxiety to hide her feelings, she bade him, "take the mole traps immediately to the bailiff at Mr. Tomlinson's," and, like her, desirous to with-

draw from all eyes, William immediately set out.

Bitter tears rolled down the poor wanderer's cheeks, as he slowly, rather stole, than walked, along the well-known road; the remembrance of the kindness he had experienced, and the sorrow of parting from his beloved friends, affected him more than any feeling of terror for the future on his own account. To this was added his dread of his dear mother's sufferings. He knew her constitution was injured by privations she had endured for his sake, and he feared that her daughter-in-law, unconscious of her worth, would ill repay the tenderness with which he was aware she would be treated. Whilst these thoughts pressed on his mind, and caused him to walk, regardless of his steps, with his eyes bent downwards, he was aroused by a person suddenly striking him on the

shoulder, crying, "What cheer, friend?" It instantly struck William that he was seized by a press gang; but on looking up, to his great relief he perceived only the bailiff's assistant, who said he had been dispatched on purpose to bring him to the Hall, as Mistress wanted him. Ever happy in her commands, William gladly obeyed, inwardly thankful that by this trifling incident he was taught to see how much more unhappy he might have been.

"I have got a place for you," said Mrs. Tomlinson, with a look of beneficent kindness.

"A place!" said William, gasping for breath, like one who feels himself under supernatural influence.

"Yes; you will be footman to Mr. Thorncliffe, whose lady is my sister, and who I am certain will be very good to you if you deserve it:—they are a serious family, and I have recommended you, as

being a well-inclined boy, brought up by religious friends of their persuasion."

William made a low bow, in which gesture supplied the place of speech; for so much was he struck by the apparently miraculous interposition of Heaven in his behalf, that he was unable to speak.

"The butler," continued the lady, "will teach you your duty; the wages have not been mentioned, for I was eager to ensure you the place, having had my eye upon you this long time. As, however, you cannot go into a strange place without being clothed, I will lend you two guineas, to be repaid out of your first wages; and I have made you up a bundle which contains a little of every thing necessary."

William took the bundle and the money, almost fearing to find the whole of this a dream; but his quivering lip, his eager glistening eye, rendered his half-uttered thanks fully intelligible to the lady, who having repeated her directions and in-

structions to him twice, suffered him to withdraw with the joyful news, which appeared to Betty still more wonderful than to himself, and awoke in her such sensations of gratitude to Providence, even Joseph partook in her happiness and re-echoed her praises.

In a short time, the poor pig, so long looked to as the riches of the house, was disposed of; and being well fed, brought such a price as, with poor William's money, paid the debt to the mantua-maker, and enabled Mary to return.

Betty did her utmost to render William as decent as it was possible, being really grieved to apply his money to the wants of her family, much as he was indebted to her, and secretly resolving to repay him by her future work, she parted from him with a look of encouragement, though her smile was chastened by a tear; but, as Mary had entered the house not an hour before, she felt this exertion neces sary for the stranger's sake, who migh

have been wounded by observing the full possession which the beggar boy held of her affections.

Our wanderer now entered on a scene of life totally different to any thing he had ever before witnessed — he found himself at once in possession of all the comforts and even elegancies of life, secured by comparatively little labour, and compatible with much mental improvement. The servants appeared well inclined towards him, and his lady so greatly resembled Mrs. Tomlinson, that he had no doubt of being perfectly happy; and all he could possibly have to fear, was the continuance of so much good fortune.

William did not see his master till late in the evening of the second day, when he returned from an excursion to a distant town to hear a celebrated Methodist preacher. He was accompanied by several friends, and on the bell-ringing.

the new foot-boy was told it was his duty to attend.

William entered with a little trepidation lest he should appear awkward among strangers; but this was amazingly increased when a person of fierce countenance and haughty manners, hastily cried:

"Where's my Checks? hey! Where have you laid them; tell me this moment? Speak boy."

"Your Checks, Sir?"

"Aye, my Checks? Fletcher's Checks? you scoundrel, where have you put them?"

"Nowhere, Sir; indeed, Sir, I,—I, don't know what they are."

"Scoundrel! not know Fletcher's Checks to Antinomianism? Not know a book that is never out of my hand? You puppy, get out of my sight."

Poor William's obedience was very prompt at this moment; but just as he

was closing the door, one of the guests rising, reached a book from the work table of the lady of the house, saying, "here it is, brother, do not disturb yourself."

The speaker was a man of vulgar appearance, and his address mingled the servility of a fawning dependant, with the impudence of a conscious superior; so that even the hasty manner in which William saw the transaction struck him as very singular, while his own share of it was painful, and impressed him with the idea that his stay would be very short with such a hasty master. He began to arrange the tray for supper with much secret perturbation, not unmixed with curiosity; and when the butler entered, could not forbear saying, though with much modesty; "I thought Mrs. Tomlinson called my master a, a, a, religious gentleman?"

"Most likely, for he has been so for

a year, or more, I believe; don't you see he has got a roomful of such like people about him; queer company for a *gentleman*, but that's neither my affair nor your's; — mind the spoons are clean."

At this moment the housemaid looked in. "Pray," said she, "do you know how many of the strangers are likely to stay, my mistress has given no orders yet?"

"Oh, every one, depend on't, they are all saints; and not one will leave the house while he can have the shadow of an excuse for stopping in it."

"I thought they were on business, for I heard 'em talking about iron ore, and Oakdale farm."

"Very likely, we deal a good deal in mixtures at our house now-a-days; strange hodge-podge, grasping at money in all trades, pretending to despise the world and the things of the flesh too, hating all our neighbours, with nothing but

Scripture on our tongues; but hush, there's the supper-bell; No! 'tis the prayer-bell."

The servants all immediately hastened to the parlour, where, on the preceding night, they had also met, whilst their pious and amiable mistress had read family prayer. Her place was now filled by an ignorant, conceited young man, who, without either talents or knowledge, uttered, with much noise and violent gesticulation, a rhapsody in which petition was offered to the majesty of heaven in language less energetic than impertinent, and frequently bordering on blasphemy. The moment this person ceased to speak, he was succeeded by another, whose prayer, though marked by less glaring impropriety, was uttered in such coarse language, and with such a multitude of unmeaning repetitions, that William could not help thinking, either Joseph or Betty were more calculated for public speakers; but he was

called from this observation by hearing the person go on to abuse some of the neighbouring gentry, even by name, in his prayer, under an affectation of lamenting for their sins, and crying out for mercy on their souls, accusing them of various crimes, and declaring them in the high road to perdition ; a mode of scandal perhaps of all others the most efficient, since it not only precluded all reply in favour of the accused, but impressed the listener with a decided belief that Christian charity dictated the accusation.

When the assembly rose from their knees, Mr. Thorncliffe shook hands with the last speaker with an air of uncommon satisfaction, observing, " ah, brother Burnbottom, you may pray, but I fear it is all in vain, for a predestinarian, such as Mr. Grayson. Depend on it those who " sin that grace may abound," will never find grace in the sight of him who demands perfection from us."

"But, my love," observed Mrs. Thorncliffe meekly, "we have no right to conclude Mr. Grayson is a person of that description; we have lived near him many years, and never heard any thing but good of him, or his family; *he* was many years a true Christian before *we* had one serious thought."

"How like a fool you talk," cried the husband, his eyes flashing fire, and his whole figure dilating with rage, "how very like a fool you *do* talk, Mrs. Thorncliffe; how can he be a Christian who is a real Antinomian? Doesn't he believe that God created thousands of creatures on purpose to damn them? Is it not a part of his creed to believe that at this very moment all Hell is hung round with little children who never could commit sin, nor even *will* a single sin? Does he not think that Christ died in vain; that his Gospel is preached in vain; that faith itself is vain as applied to tens of thousands, aye

millions of human beings? Answer me that. Does he not conclude both you and me damned? What do you say to that?"

"I have nothing more to say, my dear; if his principles are wrong, more the pity."

"If,—what do you mean by *if?* I say, I *know* they are; he is an Antinomian, which signifies one that is against the law, one that, knowing himself to be elected to eternal happiness before the world began, cares not how he sins while he passes through it; such are all your Dissenters, Calvinists, Whitfieldites, and what not."

Mr. Thorncliffe sat down, triumphantly casting an eye of appeal on all around him, and a murmur of applause was heard; consisting of mixed sounds, arising partly from groans, and partly from ejaculations; but as the covers were at the same moment taken off the table, and a plentiful and luxurious

supper appeared, it is difficult to say whether the applause was accorded to the speaker, or the provider, since the characters were united in one person.

Satisfied with having silenced his wife, condemned his neighbour, and displayed his own religious zeal, Mr. Thorncliffe began to carve with equal complacency and dexterity ; and a smile of good humour that almost reconciled his humble servitor. But alas! his calms were ever of short duration, the turkey poult was found roasted to a cinder; and although Mr. Thorncliffe would not swear, he could not forbear to send the cook to the devil, notwithstanding he was informed, that the misfortune had arisen from her stepping to listen to the prayers, from whence her office had unhappily excluded her, she being one who was lately become an "enquiring soul." "I'll *enquire* her, a good-for-nothing slut!" cried the master, forgetting in his rage the technicalities of

his new profession, " what business has she to enquire — an impudent — "

A look from his lady reminded him that he was surrounded by the Brethren, and in an instant his passion was gone; for although become of late as great a tyrant in his family as ever existed, he was yet obedient, and almost humble towards all those who were any way instrumental to extending his fame as a religious character; and to the higher order of preachers, he appeared the most docile and subdued proselyte in their circle, and although none of these were now present, yet he would have been exceedingly hurt if any of the company should report him to their betters. In a short time, worldly business succeeded to spiritual; it appeared that the desire of wealth had taken such possession of poor Thorncliffe's heart, that his schemes for obtaining it were too numerous for his management, and most of his present party were in one way or other employed as agents, and even some in the

most subordinate parts of various manufactories; so that in point of rank, they had less right to sit at his table than his menial servants. But their profession of "like faith with his," admitted them to this privilege, neither party yet knowing their places in that new situation in which his recent conversion had placed them.

Day after day, William continued to witness the conduct of this strange, but not singular character, who, with great zeal, "but not according to knowledge," continued to exhibit, under a flaming profession of religion, all the errors of an unchanged and depraved nature, the terror of his wife, the tormentor of his servants, and the general scourge of his dependents; while to strangers who preyed on his weakness, gratified his vanity, and extolled his holiness, he was generous to profusion, and compliant to folly. None within his circle suffered so much from his temper as William, both because

he was the youngest of his servants, and the one who was the most about his person; he therefore partook the severity of his despotism in common with his wife, who was so unaffectedly pious, truly amiable, and considerate, that the good-natured boy often rejoiced in believing that he relieved in any manner her burden.

Whatever might be the nature or amount of those grievances poor William now endured, he took great care to conceal them from his good mother, in the short interviews which he now occasionally enjoyed with her; and as he was much improved in his person and manners, appeared well fed, and well cloathed, and was known to reside with religious people, poor Betty's fondest wishes were fufilled for him, and she considered his present situation not only a rich reward for all her cares, but the greatest personal comfort she now enjoyed; and although she had many troubles, she yet sought not to damp his pleasures by

claiming his sympathy. Her's was indeed a generous and tender heart, under the true government of those principles of which poor Mr. Thorncliffe spoke much, but understood little.

CHAP. V.

——— Had he found a friend
When conscience told him it was time to mend,
Had Reason ruled him in her proper place,
And Virtue led him, while he lean'd on Grace,
These guides had placed him on a solid rock.

CRABBE.

THE multifarious concerns of Mr. Thorncliffe, which had transformed him by degrees from a country gentleman, into a farmer, manufacturer, and general dealer, had a benefical effect on William, by calling into action the little of education which he had attained, and greatly increasing by practice, his knowlege of penmanship and figures. Often would he wish that his master would place him in any positive line of life to which he could dedicate his labour, and in

which he might exercise his abilities; but of this he saw little prospect, as he became every day of more value to him in the house, and of course it was not likely that he should part with him.

It will be naturally concluded that a boy of William's disposition, would endeavour at every proper interval which his duties permitted, to improve his mind by reading, and that in a gentleman's house, either from the master or servants, some books could hardly fail to be procured, which would impart desirable information to one whose views had been hitherto so bounded. Unfortunately, in the intemperance of his zeal, Mr. Thorncliffe had destroyed his library, so that the house at this time afforded no other books than Fletcher's Checks to Antinomianism, the Arminian Magazines, a few of Baxter's works, and those of his old friend Bunyan. On the Magazines William seized with eagerness, and missing the pages more usefully devoted,

dwelt on the wonderful ghost stories and tales of extraordinary judgments, with which that work a few years ago was too well supplied. It may be naturally concluded that these relations impressed his mind with awe, and it is not unlikely that the latter had a salutary effect, by deeply embuing his mind with the belief of an all-seeing, all-directing, Providence, nor were the former injurious to *him*, though calculated to enervate young people in his situation. William had the good sense to be aware, that during the time when he had been a solitary wanderer, now surprised by the shades of night far from all human aid, now driven to the lonely hovel, the rocky cavern, or the church porch, by the howling tempest, that had the horrors of superstitious fear been added to his miseries, he could not have endured them; and that many natural appearances would have disturbed a mind so influenced amid such scenes. Perceiving also,

from the controversial turn of his master's conversation, that people who meant well, and had studied much, could yet not agree in their opinions on particular points, he concluded that it was very possible that many good men might be of very distinct opinions, and yet offer acceptable worship to God, provided their objects of faith embraced the leading doctrines of Christianity, and their conduct accorded with the system of morals enforced by the New Testament, which was ever perused by William with pleasure and satisfaction; and together with his hymn book, and a torn copy of "God's Wonders in the Creation," profitably filled up the little leisure, which his various occupations afforded him.

When William had been about eight months in his present situation, and was recollecting that the winter was set in hardly, and his beloved friends at the cottage would experience its rigour in various ways, (an idea that drew bitter

sighs from his heart,) he was one evening summoned to answer a loud rap at the door, when company was neither wished-for nor expected.

The single indulgence Mr. Thorncliffe allowed himself of that description which he had of late renounced, was now and then a game at cribbage, which he sometimes partook with his wife, at others, with the exciseman of the parish. He was at this moment sitting with the latter, and vociferating with his usual warmth, "fifteen-four and a sequence, which makes up my game," when William announced a preacher, named Locker, his wife, and a female friend, who was also a public speaker, and whose character for superior sanctity was spoken of all over the country.

Turning as pale as death, with an air of spasmodic pain, Mr. Thorncliffe threw down the cards with the air of a condemned criminal, but the next, perceiving his infallible pope had not yet actually

entered the room, he made a desperate effort at recovering self-possession, and huddled the cards into the table-drawer. His companion suddenly comprehending the meaning of all this, assisted him to secrete them; and by the time the party entered, each sat bolt upright with hands unpolluted by the hated cards; but alas! the luckless cribbage-board still stood between them, at once the proof of guilt, and the punishment of the guilty.

Mutual congratulations and customary greetings were scarcely passed, when Brother Locker, who was a very portly and, indeed, handsome man, passed forward to take possession of the great-chair, now resigned by the little exciseman, whose only care was to take himself away, and leave the prohibited articles of his late commerce to their fate. "What can this curious little thing be for?" said the preacher, with a look that showed at the same time he was well aware of its intended use, and guessed its late situation.

"We call it a cribbage-board," replied the wife; eager to assist her husband, notwithstanding his general unkindness to her.

A deep groan burst from the lips of the newly arrived females, followed by a long murmuring sound, not unlike the distant moan of the screech owl, in her who considered herself the public reformer, while the preacher himself, swelling in his chair, as if with holy indignation, exclaimed, "Sister Thorncliffe, sister Thorncliffe, there are no cribbage-boards in Heaven, nor are there any in Hell either; therefore we have no business to use them on earth, seeing it is, as I may say, a kind of bridge by which mortal man passes to either one place or the other; not but, as I may say, this board, to my view of things, is a ladder by which a man goes as it were step by step to everlasting damnation;—every hole is one foot nearer to the bottomless pit, and the top peg, is one of the posts

of that gate which opens to Pandemonium."

Happy to be safely delivered of so hard a word, the preacher paused for a moment; but that pause was supplied by sounds of approbation, which now resembled the cooings of the dove, from his fair companion, whose eyes were fixed upon him with an admiration approaching to idolatry; whilst deep sighs, not unmingled with indignant emotions, heaved the breast of the late delinquent; and as his countenance generally indicated what passed within, the preacher, during this pause, entirely changed the plan of his intended attack, and with admirable presence of mind continued.

"It was not by cribbage-boards, and cards, and dice, that the primitive Christian (I have forgot his name) became so meet for heaven, that he sent for a young man when he lay on his death-bed, as he said, 'to see a Christian die.' — Oh! that

was great — dear, dear, how can I forget his name."

"It was Addison," said Mrs. Thorncliffe.

"Aye, very like, sister; I only remember he was a bishop *, or something of that kind amongst the Nonconformists. How different from the bishops of our time, they are altogether puffed up with pride and haughtiness; they are 'lazy dogs and will not bark;' — 'grinding the faces of the poor, and oppressing the needy;' fie on them! *fie on them!* they are dealers in all unrighteousness, 'eating up my people as it were bread, saith the Lord.'"

While the poor man thus vented his wrath against a body of men of whose conduct he was as ignorant as the Bramins of Hindoostan, William, who was laying the cloth for supper, was again summoned to the door, and the sound of

* Fact.

voices in the hall induced new and increasing confusion in the perturbed breast of the master of the mansion.

Mr. Thorncliffe distinctly heard the rector of his parish, accompanied by some friend, inquire for him, and walk on towards the room where he sat; and he found himself in the precise situation of an invalid, who receives a visit from a worthy and skilful physician, at the very time he has surreptitiously admitted a quack to his chamber. The very man whom a few minutes before he had listened to with fear, he now beheld with shame, and him whom he had a thousand times received with joy, he now saw enter with aversion; yet involuntary respect, mingled even with this painful combination of feeling. Had Mr. Thorncliffe been sufficiently himself, it is probable that he would have felt something like the gratification of revenge, on observing the evident confusion of his guest also, on hearing the hasty annunciation of

Mr. Greville the rector. Although not a minute before, the whole bench of bishops had been proscribed and defied, yet a humble country rector, of the most unassuming deportment, and general character of quietness and tolerance, had something in his very name which made conscious ignorance and malevolence tremble.

"My friend, Mr. Hilton, (whom I hope to-morrow, to induct into the neighbouring parish church,) has induced me to take him so long a walk, that we are fairly benighted, and what is worse, caught in the storm, so we turn in, to beg shelter half an hour, my dear Madam," said the Rector to the lady of the house, who received him and his friend with the utmost urbanity.

Mr. Thorncliffe was habitually hospitable, and as supper was now on his table, it afforded him a desirable opportunity for recovering himself, but the moment he opened his mouth to do so, he felt

aware of the extreme awkwardness of asking such opposite characters, as an ignorant field preacher, and two gentlemen high in the church, to sit down together; Mr. Greville relieved him by taking a seat, and offering his friend one, observing, "he had sat too frequently at that table to need many invitations to it now."

Certain remembrances of the happiest, and certainly the least reprehensible hours he had ever passed came to Thorncliffe's mind, and something almost like a tear rose to his eye. Mr. Locker took his seat at the bottom of the table, with an air of ostentatious humility; his fair companion gave an approving murmur; his wife alone was at ease, she did not often partake his visits, nor share such good cheer as that before her; and though a modest and amiable woman, she felt disposed to be comfortable, and looked as if she did. Mr. Greville, pleased with the simplicity of her manners, and ad-

miring the fair round face, to which even a prim plaited cap could not give an air of formality, addressed her with kindness, invited her to take wine with him, and encouraged her to conversation.

Mr. Locker, though not disposed to admire his wife, when in company with her more enlightened friend, Miss Benley, yet felt himself complimented in this attention; and began to think the bench of bishops was not composed of the "refuse of the earth;"—he hemmed thrice, made various dispositions and even contortions, indicative of an intention to speak, every one of which put Mr. Thorncliffe into agonies, as though he must be answerable for all the folly of one party, and the sin of the other; but at length, when attention was fixed, all conversation suspended, and the long expected speech brought forth, it consisted only of an observation, that the "sausage was excellent."

"Sausages are very good things," added Mr. Hilton.

Mr. Thorncliffe, though generally one of those men who will be heard in company, had been hitherto silent, in despite of every effort, felt that he could now speak, and observed, "they are so, yet they are a strange mixture." The moment the words had escaped him, he felt that nothing could be more mal-a-propos, than to speak of mixtures. He shrunk in his chair, as if desirous of hiding himself from the eye of the rector, which followed him with a penetrating, yet good humoured expression, as he replied.

"The circumstance of being a mixture, cannot render them less likely to be agreeable. What is life, but a mixture, yet we all desire length of days! Matrimony is a mixture, yet most of us seek it! In fact all society is a mixture, frequently of the most diverse ingredients, yet we cannot live without it,—the world is compounded of contradic-

tory elements, and man himself, the strangest mixture of all."

Mr. Greville spoke with an air of cheerfulness, but as his words might bear a sense of examination, in unison with a grave subject, the major part of the company sighed at the view of human nature thus opened to them; and Mr. Thorncliffe, not knowing which side to take, fidgetted in his chair, in such evident uneasiness, that the clergymen took their leave as soon as the cloth was drawn; and although this was not to his relief, he felt without the power of opposing the proposal; he could not, however, help rendering their walk as pleasant as circumstances allowed, by providing them with coats, and sending William to light them home.

" We are indebted to your Methodistical friend, for very good entertainment," observed Mr. Hilton, as he passed through the garden-door; " but I must own, it reminded me of the

comedy of the Jew, where the hero of the piece seems to be benevolent in spite of his nature."

"In poor Thorncliffe, the case is reversed; for when he is otherwise, it will be in spite of his nature,—he is a generous, passionate, volatile man, with just so much of good about him, as to make one believe him capable of being better; unluckily his own efforts to that end have of late made him considerably worse."

"A singular conclusion—I have no idea how a man can become worse, by an effort to become better, if he is sincere in that effort."

"Then the history of poor Thorncliffe will tell you—he was left early in life an orphan, and never had the happiness to be under the command of a strict guardian, or a severe master, which was the more necessary, because his passions were much stronger than his mind, and his circumstances good enough to render him easy, though not wealthy enough,

for the purposes of extravagance, or the designs of ambition.

"As he did not like application, he never *read;* of course having no *internal* amusement, and being of a lively and active temper, he sought it from *without*, and by dint of hunting, shooting, dancing, and now and then quarrelling, he got over his minority, much to his own satisfaction; he then took possession of his estate, on which he meditated abundance of improvements, and as he was no fool, and had the command of money, he really did make many, but would certainly have carried his plans to that excess, which is the great error of all un-reflecting minds, if he had not happened to fall violently in love with the best and cleverest girl in the neighbourhood, one of the prettiest too, as you might perceive, notwithstanding the sickly hue she now wears."

"I thought her very interesting, and was surprised how such a woman could

have chosen such a man ; but I suppose she was portionless, and therefore induced to marry, as so many women are, for the sake of an establishment."

"No such thing, the attachment was mutual. Thorncliffe was remarkable for his personal courage, which he manifested in behalf of her brother; he was too, a generous, free-hearted young fellow. There are no two qualities which so certainly impress the heart of a woman ; give her these, and her imagination will soon add all she had wished for besides. You may see every-day women of the most cultivated minds, marry mere boobies, because they have been told they were brave; and worthless spendthrifts, because they conclude them generous."

"'Tis a proof of great weakness, begging the ladies' pardon, but we must not condemn without considering the nature of the faulty; woman is certainly the weaker vessel."

"You are not married," said the rec-

tor, "else your words might have made an unquiet house;" but in defence of the women, we may observe further, they are the daughters of men. I have frequently remarked that the most learned, and even those generally considered the most sensible men of my acquaintance, have for the most part married women who were either mere babies, or those remarkably ignorant, and averse to information, which arose, I apprehend from the extreme desire they felt to rule alone, to have no mental rival in their house; or that considering woman merely as an animal, if she were handsome of the kind, that was sufficient: unknowing, it appeared, that the first want of the heart is a companion, the first wish of the cultivated mind in a companion, the power of appreciating its talents, and partaking its pursuits; such is human nature, when, like the subject of our conversation, it consults any faculty, or feeling, save its judgment, which should be ever paramount."

" But, my dear Sir, go on with Mr. Thorncliffe."

" Whilst he continued a doating lover, he appeared very amiable; but as that time soon elapsed, he became bustling, noisy, busy, peremptory, and proud ; a continual propensity to business led him into many schemes ; but the benignant, though unostentatious influence of his wife, preserved him from great errors, and secured to his house the best company of a respectable neighbourhood. He was convivial, but rarely intemperate ; expensive, but not prodigal ; but his temper grew more unmanageable as his power naturally increased ; and he contracted a habit of swearing, which his wife could not check, and a total indifference towards even the forms of religion, which afflicted her exceedingly. As his family increased, so he added to his schemes for enriching it, which, by giving a greater number of dependants into his power, produced still more that overbearing

spirit, which threatened to become as rancorous, as it was violent. Such was the man, when a small body of Methodists among his tenantry, ventured to introduce a preacher into one of their houses; great opposition was expected from the squire, who abhorred all innovation save his own. He did not disappoint these expectations; foaming with rage, he swore to root them out of the land, and for some time held the projectors of this bold attempt at bay; but when at length they proceeded so far, as really to commence speaking, he flew to the place, and essayed to tear the honest cobler, who was exhorting, from his little rostrum, by manual force. At the very time this shameful scene was taking place; his eldest son, being probably neglected by the servants, in consequence of their attention to their master's conduct, was thrown from his poney, and so dreadfully bruised, that he survived but two days. This child had been dearer to him than any earthly thing;

the suddenness of his death, and the manner of it, first led him to think on the subject, and while the heart of the father was wounded, the eyes of the man were opened, and he perceived himself to be an accountable being, on the brink of an abyss, for which he was totally unprepared. During this state of alarm and deep distress, he was waited upon by one of the society, whom he had treated so improperly; and this person seeing the state of his mind, and being himself probably affected by the singularity of that awful dispensation, which had humbled, or at least chastened his late opponent, made such use of the interview, that Thorncliffe attached himself to the Methodists, and considered himself, "a brand plucked from the burning," by the prayers they offered for the safety of his soul. It became his delight to hear his name coupled with that of St. Paul, who, from being a persecutor, became a minister; and his wife, who was a wounded mother, was

herself led to look for consolation in religion; rejoiced to see any devout sentiments awakened in him; their house shortly became the rendezvous of the preachers, and a kind of common-hall to all the sect, whose influence in a short time interfered and mingled with all his concerns, and left every thing about the place, changed more materially than the master."

"Yet surely he is a very altered man?"

"In word, rather than deed; for alas! manners and modes may change, yet the man be unchanged. Mr. Thorncliffe, having under the influence of terror, cast off a few bad habits, fancies that he is a converted man, and therefore spares himself the trouble of examining his heart, and subduing his evil passions, which still "as in his days of nature are unburnt and purged away." 'Tis true he no longer swears, but he still contrives to indulge the temper which made him swear, by abuse of his servants, and ill-humour to

his wife; he follows no worldly amusement, but the perpetual irritability, which kept him ever in action, and was wont to be satisfied with business in the morning, and farthing loo at night, now hazards his property, and injures his family by chimerical projects, and an avarice of gain, which grasps at every thing within and without its reach. While that vindictive spirit, which formerly broke forth against a paltry poacher, now finds vent, through the medium of controversial divinity, against every neighbour who presumes to differ with him. Ambitious of a name, he seeks distinction through a medium at which his better judgment revolts; but utterly unaccustomed to reflect, or analyse, he is a total stranger to the real state of his own mind, and the inconsistency of his conduct; hence he is a slave to his sect; a tyrant to his family; a self-deceiving sinner and a self-approving saint; at once looking down from the eminence of his supposed sanctity, upon

those friends who might lead his inexperience, and looking up to the ignorant whom, with all his deficiencies, he has the power to instruct, because he conceives them enlightened by inspiration."

"Poor man! I am almost induced to pity him, for I consider him the mere tool of a set of designing hypocrites, who cajole him, and prey upon him."

"That judgment is wrong, my dear Sir; before you have lived as long in the world as I have you will learn (if you look into the subject with candour), that, notwithstanding appearances, there are very few hypocrites among the Methodists; in general they are sincere, well-meaning, enthusiastic zealots, whose imagination, untamed by study, may lead them wrong, but whose piety and devotion are often admirable. I have seen instances of the purest resignation, the most self-denying charity, and anxious zeal for the glory of God and the welfare of mankind amongst them; and I really

think the good they have done, in the lower orders of society, is incalculable."

"Then you do not discourage them in your parish?"

"Not positively, yet I confess I had rather not have them here."

"How can that be, while you allow so much good in them?"

"Pardon me, if I make a distinction, to which, it is probable, you, as a young man, may not have adverted:—in all large towns Methodists do abundance of good, because there is a great deal of wickedness in extensive communities, that calls for the violent energies, the unwearied watchfulness, the sympathies of congenial habits, language, and temptations, which men of similar occupation can best delineate to each other. When the habitual drunkard, the daringly profane, becomes a preacher of righteousness in his own manufactory, amongst the sharers of his crimes, he claims attention from his singularity, in the first instance, but will

afterwards insure it from better motives. Gratitude to God, and love to man, inspires him with ardour, which tramples on difficulty, rejoices in suffering, abounds in love, and attracts by the devotedness and intensity of its feelings. Going, as it were, into the highways and hedges of society, such a one will indeed compel, persuade, those to come in, who, living out of the very pale of the church, cannot otherwise be induced to listen. It may be truly said, 'knowing the terrors of the law, they persuade men;' and, doubtless, 'turning many to righteousness,' shall 'themselves, shine as the stars for ever.'

" But," continued Mr. Greville, 'in the country, where sin abounds less glaringly, where it is possible to draw with the cords of love, I have observed that simplicity of heart and manners is always lost by the introduction of these strangers, however good their first intention may be. Finding fewer objects of magnitude, on

which to dart the lightning of Heaven, (ever the favourite topic with new converts,) they frequently create schisms in the church, disunion in private life, and contempt for establishments of every description. They often inspire the ignorant with great spiritual pride, and an affectation of knowledge so disgusting, that is apt to awaken in their minister, resentment which may lead to persecution, or despondency, which may render him unequal to fulfilling his duties; on this subject I can speak from painful experience."

"I am heartily sorry to hear it, both for your sake and my own, since the vicinity of my future residence renders me liable to the same evils."

"It is on that account, my good Sir, that I speak to you so freely, anxious to show you the thorns in your path, that you may escape them by prudence, or disarm them by wisdom;—the tie between a minister and his people is, or

ought to be, one of the most endearing as well as sacred, which binds man to man, and, like that of marriage, it ought not to be lightly broken; errors may creep in on either side, which may be amended without proceeding to extremities, which in both cases may be termed, the calling in of a third party. When the wife, thus seduced from her affianced lord, not only listens to a stranger, but spurns the hand that has long sought to feed her with the bread of life, she inflicts a pang of which, I am persuaded, she is seldom aware. I declare to you, my young friend, that I have gazed on empty pews, with a sensation so severe, it seemed as though my limbs, my very sinews were torn from my bleeding body; and when at the Lord's table, I missed the grey-headed old man and his decent wife, the new-married couple, or the young mother, who used to form my beloved circle, I—"

Mr. Greville suddenly stopped, it was

evident that his feelings overpowered him; — after a pause, Mr. Hilton exclaimed in a sympathetic voice;

"But surely, Sir, these people returned to you?"

"In numerous instances they have, and where that was the case, I found them attentive hearers, devout communicants, and respectable characters, in the parish. In fact, their desertion rendered me more diligent, and more anxious to offer my flock that pasturage best calculated for their necessities; this has been the case with many clergymen, so that these people have done great good in this respect. I am, however, decidedly of opinion, that as the increase of knowledge in all ranks will necessarily call for more enlightened instructors, so the Methodists will, in a short time, become again absorbed in the Establishment from which they originally sprung, and from which it was by no means the intention of their founder to divide them."

"You have more personal knowledge of them than I have, yet I differ from you in this conclusion," replied Mr. Hilton, "from all I can learn, these people now cultivate, in a degree, that knowledge they formerly despised; and as 'a little learning is a dangerous thing,' so I fear it will be found, that all they possess will tend eventually to puff them up, and, adding its influence to the enthusiastic zeal, which is their great characteristic, render them dangerous both to church and state. Your friend Mr. Thorncliffe is as great a bigot and fanatic, as full of fury and blindness, as either Queen Mary or Bishop Bonner, and, if he had the power, would light the fires of Smithfield as soon; from such men, may God and our governors preserve us?"

"Oh! poor Thorncliffe is a kind of *rara avis*; you are too hard upon them a great deal, for depend upon it, many "of whom the world is not worthy," may be found among'em."

William's heart beat very quick, and twice he almost articulated the name of that beloved mother, who had snatched him from misery, and most probably saved him from guilt; but his modesty, and due sense of his situation, prevented him from speaking; and as the last observation landed the little party within Mr. Greville's gates, the grateful wishes of his heart, were frustrated for the present—he was told to go and dry himself by the kitchen fire, and Mr. Greville's servant was ordered to tie the great-coats in a bundle, and give the boy a mug of beer, to take while he warmed himself.

A respectable elderly woman was sitting by the fire, mending her master's stockings; but with that officiousness which a sense of duty supplies, she rose to tie the bundle better than the man had done it; in doing this, her spectacles fell off, and one of their glasses was broken. "Dear me, what a job is this," exclaimed the poor woman, "I

can do nothing without them, and for that matter, little with them—how I do wish, Missess could hear of a nice tidy girl, with pretty good hands at her needle; for neither herself nor me are worth a farthing now-a-days."

Again poor William's heart beat quick, and his colour rose, but he felt as if he durst not speak; and he was departing with his bundle, when the pleasant way in which the old servant bid him "good night," encouraged him; he stepped back, and after hoping, "she wouldn't think him too bold," begged to say, "he knew a young girl, who sewed very well, and had begun to be a mantua-maker, he believed."

"Who was she?" was quickly asked, and answered, but alas! the rising hope was suddenly extinguished, by the observation, of "O! old Allen's girl—they are Methodist folks, I never knew any good come of they—it was Allen's wife," said she, (turning to the man)

"that took that vagabond boy some two years back, I remember; I suppose, she'd a mind to see if the proverb be true, 'the greater the saint, the greater the sinner.'"

Poor William turned as red as scarlet, and the tears struck into his eyes, and as he had just taken up the lantern, the change in his countenance was very visible—the good woman instantly recollected she had heard, this poor boy had been taken into the service of Mr. Thorncliffe, and she had now no doubt, he stood before her, and that he possessed both gratitude, and sensibility, whatever the Allens might do. Sorry for the pain she had given, she instantly began enquiries in a different tone, which ended in a declaration, that she would introduce the young girl to her mistress, "and if so be they agreed, she would take care to make the house comfortable to her," for her part, "she knew there

were good and bad of all sorts, and his reverence said the same."

As William was indeed aware of the master's liberality, and much pleased with the air of comfort and quietness in his house, he considered this a delightful prospect for Joseph's daughter, and had, on the following morning, when he ran over with the news, the satisfaction to find it hailed as such by the family, for winter had now set in, with all its usual trials, which were felt particularly hard to the young girl, who had been very differently situated till now.

Betty accompanied her step-daughter to Mr. Greville's, and as she was a woman of great simplicity of manners, entirely free from that affectation, which frequently renders even the worthiest people in the sect to which she rather inclined, than belonged, unpleasant; Mrs. Greville, though unconscious of the extraordinary virtues she really possessed, soon engaged her daughter. Mary Allen

had by this time learnt the value of that mother-in-law she had at one time dreaded, and of course, in a degree disliked; and the manner in which she parted from her, showed the family she entered, so much of the humble merits of poor Betty, that they became her friends, and though living at the distance of some miles, contrived to assist Joseph considerably, in the course of the inclement season, during which he was a sufferer; so that he had not for many years got over a winter so well as the present.

END OF THE THIRD VOLUME.